

What should be the Standard for Evaluating Political Representatives?

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(The Centre for Ethics as a Study in Human Value)

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts

Supervised by: Matej Cibik, PhD

Pardubice, Czech Republic 2024

University of
Pardubice Faculty of
Arts and Philosophy
Academic year:
2022/2023

ASSIGNMENT OF DIPLOMA THESIS

(project, art work, art performance)

Name and surname: **Chukwudi Chukwu, BSc.**

Personal number: **H22444**

Study programme: **N0223A100014 Ethics and Political Philosophy**

Work topic: **WHAT SHOULD BE THE STANDARD FOR EVALUATING
POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES?**

Assigning department: **Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies**

Theses guidelines

WHAT SHOULD BE THE STANDARD FOR EVALUATING POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES?

Democracy is a political system that has the features of political participation as well as political representation. Through a proper electoral procedure, the citizens delegate authority to few members who will be political actors representing their constituents. As Hanna Pitkin would say that as political actors, 'they speak, advocate, symbolize, and act on behalf of others in the political arena.' The elected representatives are agents who will make and determine how policies are to be implemented.

Nigeria and some other African countries are democratic states. There have been experiences of political representatives not properly representing the interest and needs of the people in the policy making.

The elected representative prioritizes their personal gain over the goodwill of their constituents. Giving the fact that political representatives have been authorized to act on behalf of their constituents, they are also to be held accountable for their duties as political actors. Thus, here comes the question: what should be the standard for evaluating political representatives? What is the proper activity of representatives? An understanding and possible answer to these questions would perhaps enable us to understand the institution and functions of political

representation.

This study will assess to what extent the political actors represent their constituents. It will identify key barriers to effective political representation in Nigeria and some other countries which includes corruption, limited civic education, religion, deficient electoral design and voters' apathy. The thesis will recommend policy interventions to strengthen political representation in Nigeria and other African democratic states, promoting citizens' political participation as well as enhancing accountability mechanism for representatives.

Extent of work report:
Extent of graphics content:
Form processing of diploma thesis: **printed/electronic**
Language of elaboration: **English**

Recommended resources:

Jacobs, Lawrence R. and Robert Y. Shapiro, 2000. *Politicians Don't Pander: Political Manipulation and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel, 1967. *The Concept of Representation*, Berkeley: University of California.

Rehfeld, Andrew, 2005. *The Concept of Constituency: Political Representation, Democratic Legitimacy and Institutional Design*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—, 2006. "Towards a General Theory of Political Representation," *the Journal of Politics*, 68: 1–21.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacque. 1990. *Discourse of the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality among Men*, in *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant*, Edited by Jerome B. Schneewind. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Excerpts from)

Saward, Michael (ed.), 2000. *Democratic Innovation: Deliberation, Representation and Association*, London: Routledge.

Supervisors of diploma thesis: **Mgr. Matej Cíbik, Ph.D.**
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Religious Studies

Date of assignment of diploma thesis: **March 31, 2023**
Submission deadline of diploma thesis: **August 30, 2024**

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30 August, 2024

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Abstract

Democracy is a political system that has the features of political participation as well as political representation. Through a proper electoral procedure, the citizens delegate authority to few members who will be political actors representing their constituents. As Hanna Pitkin would say that as political actors, ‘they speak, advocate, symbolize, and act on behalf of others in the political arena.’ The elected representatives are agents who will make and determine how policies are to be implemented.

Nigeria and some other African countries are democratic states. There have been experiences of political representatives not properly representing the interest and needs of the people in the policy making. The virtues of political representation are often lacking in many countries. Giving the fact that political representatives have been authorized to act on behalf of their constituents, they are also to be held accountable for their duties as political actors. Thus, here comes the question: what should be the standard for evaluating political representatives? What is the proper activity of representatives? An understanding and possible answer to these questions would perhaps enable us to understand the institution and functions of political representation.

This study will assess to what extent the political actors represent their constituents. It will identify key barriers to effective political representation in Nigeria and some other countries which includes corruption, limited civic education, deficient electoral design and voters’ apathy. The thesis will recommend policy interventions to strengthen political representation in Nigeria and other African democratic states, promoting citizens’ political participation as well as enhancing accountability mechanism for representatives.

Keywords: Political Representatives, Republic, Constituents, Accountability, transparency, Evaluative criteria, democracy, values of democratic representatives, corruption, Independent Electoral Commission (INEC)

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INTRODUCTION

Political representation is quintessential for democratic governance, shaping the relationship between citizens and elected officials. Citizens understanding of political representation and evaluative frameworks to assess their representatives is necessary for ensuring that democratic institutions reflect the people's interests. This thesis, "What should be the standard for evaluating political representatives?" explores the standards for evaluating political representatives. This critical inquiry addresses the theoretical perspective and the practical realities of representation in Nigeria's political system.

The first chapter explores the theoretical foundations of political representation, presenting the overviews of various political theorists and revealing the difficulties inherent in defining political representation. The second chapter shifts our focus to Nigeria, a nation rich in diversity and a complex political society. Here, we provide an analysis of the historical and contemporary dynamics of political representation in Nigeria, highlighting the achievements recorded and examining the persistent deficiencies within her political system. The third chapter presents various evaluative frameworks scholars propose for assessing political representatives. This chapter examines institutional and ethical perspectives, which serve as tools for evaluating political representatives. Furthermore, the chapter makes a few recommendations to improve political representation in Nigeria.

By adopting this structure, the thesis aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the standard for evaluating political representation, providing theoretical understandings and practical recommendations for policymakers and researchers alike. This thesis will pave the way for inclusive and accountable political representatives to reflect people's interests.

1. AN OVERVIEW OF REPRESENTATION

Throughout history, political theorists have discussed political systems and how rulers are to govern their subjects. However, how often were they concerned about the concept of representation? Learning what representation means and learning how to represent are interconnected.¹ Hanna Pitkin stands out as one of the political theorists on the discourse of political representation as acting for others. We base our analysis on Pitkin because her work, *The Concept of Representation*, is and remains the most influential contemporary work on representation. According to her, the ancient Greeks had no corresponding word of representation, though they had elected officials and ambassadors we could consider as representatives. Thus, the concept of representation is modern, and everyone wants a government or politics that is representative, though it may not be our conventional usage of representation,² in other words, not necessarily a representative government or democracy. The Romans first used the concept of representation but not in a political sense. Rather, it was used in a symbolic sense by making sculptures to reflect the realities of society,³ such as the Head of Roman Patrician whose sculpture represents the ideals of Roman Republic which prized public service and society military strength above all else.⁴ In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it became a political and religious concept to mean persons sent to participate in the Church Council or the English Parliament.⁵ By the seventeenth century, representation meant fighting for the "rights of men," the act of self-government of every man to speak up on matters that relate to him. The concept began to be institutionalized.⁶

THOMAS HOBBS' CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION

In an attempt to understand the meaning of representation, Pitkin argues that the social contractarian, Thomas Hobbes, is a major political theorist who gives us a fully developed,

¹ Hanna F. Pitkin (1967). *The Concept of Representation* (California: University of California Press),p.1

² Pitkin, p.2

³ Pitkin, p.3

⁴ Christy Kuesel 7 Ancient Sculpture you Need to Know <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-7-ancient-roman-sculptures>

⁵ Pitkin, p.3

⁶ Pitkin, p.3

systematic account of the meaning of representation.⁷ Why would Pitkin argued that Hobbes is the a major political theorist who fully developed the meaning of representation? Pitkin argues that other theorists' views on representation must be garnered from casual remarks or read between the lines. What this means is that these theorists did not explicitly or systematically develop the concept of representation in the same way that Hobbes did. Instead, their ideas on representation may be inferred from scattered references or implications in their works, rather than being the central focus of their political theory. Giving this fact, we would rather choose Hobbes' *Leviathan* as the starting point in the discourse of political representation. Since there are no conclusive understanding to the meaning of any concept, we would also consider other social contractarians such as John Locke and Jean-Jacque Rousseau who were able to draw some thoughts from Hobbes' account of the meaning of representation and contribute to a further understanding of the meaning of representation.

Even though Pitkin credits Hobbes with the concept of representation, it is pertinent to say that Hobbes did not clearly use it. We can only draw some reference or allusion to the concept of representation. Thus, to give us a political theory that depicts the concept of representation, Hobbes presents us first with a state of nature. What is the state of nature? It is a concept that Hobbes uses as a hypothetical situation of how human beings were before a civil state or how life could be before the civil state. The state of nature, according to Hobbes, is a state of war of all against all⁸ and of "continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, nasty, poor, brutish and short."⁹ The state where human beings are selfish as they seek their own personal security and well-being over and above others. So, given this situation, the question that confronts those in the state of nature is to ask what could be the remedy to escaping unfavorable incidences. The people had a sense of self-preservation. To ensure their peace and security, there was a need for the people to enter into a social contract, which is an implicit agreement by the members of the state of nature to cooperate for social benefits. The social contract was a way for the people to choose who would represent the interest of all or who would represent and ensure their preservation of life, peace, and security. Thus, the people chose a strong absolute sovereign to whom they transferred their rights to guarantee and maintain peace and security for all

⁷ Pitkin, p.4

⁸ Thomas Hobbes, (1998). *The Leviathan*. Edited by J. C. A. Gaskin (New York: Oxford University Press), p.86

⁹ Hobbes, p.84

people.¹⁰ By transferring their rights to the sovereign, they authorize him to represent them. The absolute sovereign is whom Hobbes calls the Leviathan, and his power is absolute. The contract of people creates the Leviathan “as a rational means of overcoming the dark dangers of life without government.”¹¹ Monarchy is the best kind of sovereign power,¹² which is vested in one person “as any other is inherently weak.”¹³ According to Hobbes, absolute monarchy is the best system of governance.¹⁴ Hobbes's theory could be seen as a representation of giving authority to a leader.

The Leviathan is a sovereign with absolute authority, indivisible, and total power.¹⁵ The power of the Leviathan is to enhance the first fundamental law of nature or, rather, to ensure the peace and security of individual members.¹⁶ Hobbes is said to believe that monarchy is the best kind of sovereign power,¹⁷ which is vested in one person. Some Scholars argue that Hobbes must have believed that the English Civil War occurred because power was shared between the King, Lords, and Commons.¹⁸ Hence, Hobbes argues that the power of the Leviathan is to be indivisible and unlimited;¹⁹ there cannot be any power higher than that of the sovereign.

The sovereign is viewed as representing the will of the people since the people already given him the authority to act in their behalf. In this sense, he is to make laws and other arrangements to ensure or guarantee all the state members' internal and external safety. When the sovereign fails to provide the desired safety and the state is defeated by the enemy and therefore slides into anarchy, then the sovereign has indeed failed, and the citizen should seek another sovereign power.²⁰

¹⁰ Hobbes, p.114

¹¹ Richard H. Popkin (ed), (1999). *The Columbia History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press), p.349

¹² Richard Popkin., p.349

¹³ Richard Popkin., p.349

¹⁴ Bertrand Russell, 1945. *History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Stratford Press, Inc.), p.551

¹⁵ Hobbes., p.121

¹⁶ Hobbes., p.165

¹⁷ Richard Popkin., p.349

¹⁸ Bertrand Russell, 1945. p.551

¹⁹ Hobbes, p.129

²⁰ Richard Popkin., p.349

JOHN LOCKE'S CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION

John Locke was another person who presented us with a social contract theory that could be said to depict the concept of representation; while Hobbes opines monarchy or absolutism, Locke looks unto the path of liberal democracy, in other words, a liberal democratic representation. Like Hobbes, he also began this political theorizing with the state of nature. However, Locke argues that the state of nature is not a state war but a state of peace, freedom, equality, and mutual assistance.²¹ In other words, individuals in the state of nature had certain rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and property. He acknowledges that they could be offenders in the state of nature, and it was for this reason that God granted that there be a civil government as "the proper remedy for the inconveniences of the state of nature."²² Thus, the people, having considered the seldom infringements on their natural rights, agreed to enter into a social contract to benefit all and choose who would be their leader, representing their interests. Representation in this sense could be likened to authorization to act on behalf of the people; the representative role is legitimized by the consent of people to choose a leader who ensures the safety of lives and properties. Locke is much more interested in liberal democracy. Unlike Hobbes, Locke does not believe the government's purpose is to control the people through a fierce leader but rather to protect individual rights.

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU'S CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION: Another political theorist whom we could liken his work to the concept of representation is Jean-Jacque Rousseau, who, like Hobbes, also speaks about the state of nature. According to Rousseau, the state of nature was peaceful, free, and good.²³ However, like Locke, he acknowledged that there could be offenders, and if that is the case, the people would need a leader who will uphold the law that guarantees a peaceful, free, and good life for all. Thus, the people reached a consensus to have a civil state with a legitimate authority chosen by the people. The people follow electoral processes when choosing their leaders. This leader is to ensure to rule according to the people's general

²¹ John Locke, (1980). *Second Treatise of Government*. Edited by C.B Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company Inc.), p.8

²² John Locke, (1980). p.12

²³ Jean-Jacque Rousseau, (1990). *Discourse of the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality Among Men*, in *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant*, Edited by Jerome B. Schneewind (New York: Cambridge University Press), p.606

will, which is the collective will of the people in a society and what is considered best for all; the leader will also ensure proper justice is served to offenders. Rousseau speaks of the type of ruler needed in civil society. It must be someone the people had themselves willed to rule so that in obeying the ruler, they are obeying themselves.²⁴ Isn't this similar to Hobbes' position about obedience to the Leviathan because by doing so, men obey themselves? No, it is not; Rousseau speaks from his admiration of "the ancient classical republic and thought he saw its modern counterpart in his own Geneva."²⁵ He argues that the authority should be one with a politically participatory society and should not involve a denial of human recognition and dignity;²⁶ in other words, the society should be inclusive and have a democratic leader.

These social contractarians may have yet to use the concept of representation explicitly; however, their theories are pointers to what we could understand as representation.

HANNA PITKIN'S FOUR VIEWS OF REPRESENTATION

Pitkin begins by saying that representation is a certain characteristic activity defined by certain behavioral norms or certain things that are expected of a representative.²⁷ In other words, representation is a concept that tells us or underscores certain acts or norms that we should expect of those who will represent us in the corridor of power. This was why Pitkin believed that the concept or view of representation was centered on the activity of representing. However, she also believes that no writer on representation has been able to articulate the role of representation. Since human beings are not merely political animals but also language-using animals whose ideas shape their behaviors, how we perceive a political concept, especially understanding the concept we use and its application to real-life situations, helps to shape our behaviors. In order for us to understand the concept of political representation, we must understand how the terms have been used. Pitkin says that learning what representation means and learning how to represent are interconnected. Therefore, she proceeded to identify and discuss four views on political representation.

²⁴ Jean-Jacque Rousseau., p.606

²⁵ Jean-Jacque Rousseau., p.606

²⁶ Jean-Jacque Rousseau, 1990. p.606

²⁷ Pitkin, p.60

The first view is formalistic, which concerns the formalities between the representatives and the represented, in other words, a formal political relationship between the representatives and their people. Pitkin discusses the formalistic view in two parts: the authorization and accountabilities theorists. Let us begin with the authorization theory, which is being authorized to act for the people; that is, one has been given the authority by the people to act on their behalf in a political sphere. The one who is given this authority never had it, but rather it was conferred on him or transferred to him, hence the name authorization view. The authorization view of representation is evident in Thomas Hobbes's political theory. Pitkin states that Hobbes is usually not seen or thought of as a political theorist on representation, but the concept is central to Hobbes' political work. Hobbes viewed representation in terms of giving authority and having authority. Pitkin argues that this is evident in Hobbes's political discourse on the Leviathan, which means the absolute ruler and the people's transference of authority to him. The Hobbesian argument on representation is an authoritative view, which holds that a representative is someone who has been authorized to act. It means the representative now has the right to act, while the people he represents accept his decision and bear the consequences.²⁸ When people choose a leader, the expression following their choice of leadership is the giving of authority to the leader to represent their interests. This is often seen in every political system of governance in the world that when a leader is selected or elected, he is given authority to lead the people, ensuring to represent their good of the nation.

Pitkin argues that the authorization view favors the representatives above the represented; the represented here means the constituents or citizens. Why would Pitkin think the authorization view favors their representatives above his constituents? Pitkin's claim could be valid given that the citizens have conferred the rights on the representative with complete trust in his judgment of right and wrong. The representative could abuse this conferred authority by making self-interested decisions yet deceiving his constituents by reminding them of their transference of rights to him and that they should trust his judgments. Furthermore, the authorization view is ultimately centered on the right to command. ²⁹Thus, since the representative knows he has the right to command obedience from the subjects, he can make decisions with normative consequences and command the people. However, as far as we could agree with Pitkin, there is

²⁸ Pitkin, p.39

²⁹ Pitkin, 53

an exception because the authorization view also states that when the decisions of the representative are detrimental to the lives and security of the society, then the people could revolt or depose the representative, and choose another that will represent their interest of protection of live, peace and security.³⁰

Other political theorists, such as Karl Loewenstein and Joseph Tussman, align with the Hobbesian definition. They hold that representation occurs whenever one person is authorized to act in place of others; representing men means acting with binding authority in the name of others.³¹ According to Tussman, the essence of representation is to delegate or grant authority, and authorizing a representative grants another the right to act for oneself. Within the limits of the grant of authority, one is evidently and effectively committing himself in advance to the decision or will of another.³² Authorization theory is also relatable in democracy, which is by the conferring of authority on elected representatives. This is evident when people, through an election, grant authority to specific people by voting them into political positions to represent them. An elected official is truly representative only if he has representative authority given by the people through the casting of their vote, which means that the representative has the authority to deliberate and decide for others.

The second part of the formalistic view is the *accountability theory*, which holds that if a man is aware that he will be accountable to those he represents, he is likely to be responsible and respond to the desires of those he will account for his action.³³ Therefore, since the representative is conscious of the people's expectations of him to account for his actions, it is believed that he will represent the people well. Pitkin argues that the accountability theory does not consider the duty, obligation, or role of a representative, and these representatives can intentionally act selfishly and irresponsibly, knowing that they will leave at the end of their term in office.³⁴ Pitkin points out that people who subscribe to this view only sometimes examine the representative's role or obligations. However, they speak of accountability, and the question is, what are they truly accounting for? This critique of the accountability theory of representation is

³⁰ Richard Popkin., p.349

³¹ Pitkin, p.42

³² Joseph Tussman, (1947). "The Political Theory of Thomas Hobbes" (Unpubl. Diss., University of California, Berkeley), Pp.89-119

³³ Pitkin, p.58

³⁴ Pitkin, p.58

relatable to Africa, especially Nigeria, where power is abused without visible consequences in the elections that follows. The formalistic views' authorization and accountability theories do not suffice as the meaning of representation.³⁵ Pitkin concluded that the formalistic view failed to tell us what constitutes the activities of a representative, what a representative is, or what he/she must be like to represent.³⁶ Could this be true? We agree with Pitkin that the formalistic view was made to favor the representatives. However, we disagree with her that the formalistic account of representation failed to tell us what a representative is. Rather, we could say that the formalistic account did not provide a comprehensive account of what it means to represent.

Pitkin tells us about another view of representation, which she calls *descriptive representation*. These views hold that representation is about the elected representative mirroring the life of those they represent; in other words, they should have an exact portrait of the people represented and think, feel, reason, and act like them.³⁷ Descriptive theorists argue that representative government accurately reflects the community, the general opinion of the nation, or the variety of interests in the society.³⁸ The representative body's virtue, spirit, and essence lie in its being the express image of the nation's feelings.³⁹ This view differs from authorization and accountability theories of the formalistic view because it is concerned with the representative's characteristics, what he is, or what he must like; thus, a representative should not be acting for the people; instead, it is about standing for them in the virtue of connection between them, which is a reflection or resemblance of him with his people.⁴⁰

The descriptive view was further developed among the advocates of proportional representation. The principle of proportional representation is to secure a representative assembly that reflects more or less the exactness of the various divisions in the electorates.⁴¹ In other words, representatives must be the country's or their constituents' exact image. Pitkin disagrees with the descriptive view and argues that representation is not a replica.⁴² Moreover, it is dangerous for

³⁵ Pitkin, p.58

³⁶ Pitkin, p.59

³⁷ Pitkin, p.60

³⁸ Sheldon S. Wolin, (1960). *Politics and Vision* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company), p.278; Henry J. Ford, (1924). *Representative Government* (New York: Henry Holt and Company), p.146

³⁹ Pitkin, p.61

⁴⁰ Pitkin, p.61

⁴¹ Carl J. Friedrich, (1950). *Constitutional Government and Democracy* (Boston: Ginn and Company), p.286

⁴² Pitkin, p.66

the people to think that representatives should be the exact reflection or replica of the whole nation.⁴³ We would agree with Pitkin on this, and even though we find it appealing to our emotions that people of all classes should be someone of their class represented, governance is beyond mere sentiments. It is not possible to have people of all works of life in the parliament or in the government. For example imagine having scientists, philosophers, teachers, cleaners, traders and the rest, all having someone to represent their works interest because of the belief that such representatives will better understand their plights and interests. This will be impossible to realize given the multitude of people we would have as representatives and also it will only be waste of resources, with little or no decisions to be reached on how to run the governance. The descriptive view, in this sense, limits representation to a representative simply being a reflection of his constituents and a lack of new opinion. The descriptive view of representation needs to fully account for what representation is about.

Another type of representation is *symbolic representation*, which holds that representation means to represent something, making it present by its presence. It is a theory that argues that representation is a symbolization, and just like the flag represents the nation, a representative should also represent his constituents.⁴⁴ The theorists of symbolic representation used personification to convey what they believed to be representation. They thought of human beings as symbols and argued that they stand for a nation under the right circumstances just as a flag does.⁴⁵ An excellent example of a king or queen in a monarchical governance would be a flag, which should not be looked at merely as an inanimate object. Rather, he/she is seen as a living symbol. Theorists of this view argue that the monarch stands for the majesty, the authority, and the unity of the nation.⁴⁶ He is the symbol of the community and formal representative of the state, a magnificent cipher,⁴⁷ though he has no political authority. Thus, the position of a monarch is only ceremonial, although in the ancient time, when we had traditional monarchical governance, the monarchs especially in England and Africa had political authority and represents the nation's unity. Those who still practice monarchy have moved from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy. An excellent example of a monarch who serves as a ceremonial

⁴³ Pitkin, p.73

⁴⁴ Pitkin, p.92

⁴⁵ Pitkin, p.91

⁴⁶ Pitkin, p.93

⁴⁷ Pitkin, p.103

figurehead without political authority is the King of Sweden. Sweden is a constitutional monarchy with a monarch whose power is only symbolic and not political; a parliamentary democracy governs the country. Thus, the Swedish monarch is primarily ceremonial, which involves representing the country at official events or ceremonies but is not involved in the country's political decisions.⁴⁸

The theorists of symbolic representation argue that to say that something symbolizes something else is to say that it calls to mind and, even beyond that, arouses emotions.⁴⁹ They do not perceive representation as being an activity; rather, political representation is a state of affairs; it means standing for the people, and so long as the people accept or believe in the political system, then a political representative is said to represent them.⁵⁰ They also associate symbolic representation to heads of state in general because these political leaders “represent or embody, that is, are symbols for the unity of the people of the state; as flags, coats of arms, national anthems are in a more material and functional way.”⁵¹ The theorists of symbolic representation further link representation with the people’s acceptance of the authority of the leader.⁵² A ruler is a representative if his subjects believe in him and accept him as a symbol of the nation or his constituents.

Symbolic representation views seem very appealing to what we may want in a political representation since it argues for subjects believing in their leaders, accepting them, and feeling satisfied to some extent; we could say that it is an instance of representation. However, it also has limitations since it fails to prescribe or to tell us what constitutes the activities of political representatives but only points us to political leaders as symbols of unity. Given this, we ought to look further.

The fourth view of representation is substantive representation. Pitkin argues that the above-discussed theories of representation need to address what representation truly is sufficiently. Therefore, she introduces substantive representation, which is representation as a substantive act for others. In other words, representation as substantive acting for others means that the

⁴⁸ <https://www.informationsverige.se/en/om-sverige/att-paverka-i-sverige/sa-styrs-sverige.html>

⁴⁹ Pitkin, p.96

⁵⁰ Pitkin, 102

⁵¹ Pitkin, p.93

⁵² Pitkin, p.104

represented are present in the action and regarded in the arrangements that precede or follow the action.⁵³ Substantive representation is where interest is involved, and there are no arbitrary decisions on people's choices.⁵⁴ Accordingly, the representative must be seen as capable of independent judgment and action; however, he must apply discretion since he is substantively acting for others.

So, what happens when there is a potential conflict between the representative and the represented? Pitkin suggests that when a representative is to make a decision that is supposedly not within the earlier expectation of his constituents, he must not be arrogantly persistent on his decision by leaving the represented in the dark. However, rather, he must provide an explanation to them on why he believes his decision is still in their interest. For example, a constituency needs a good road, and the representative already agreed with the constituents to ensure this is done; however, having secured some funds and taking into consideration that the constituency is underdeveloped, he therefore, channeled the funds to the provision of electrical power supply because he knows and judge this to be the best he could do for his constituency at least for a start, given that his independent decision will attract investors who will create employment opportunities, and from some of the taxes, they will generate fund to build a good road and the investors may offer some assistance in bringing various developments within the constituency. Even with all these, that is, after the representative has taken an independent decision for the best interest of this constituency, the right thing for him to do is to endeavor to speak with his constituents because he is representing them, and there should not be contestation from the constituents without a response from the representative.

Like the other views of representation, substantive representation has some limitations. Pitkin suggested that the representative should avoid contestation from his constituents. However, in a real politically complex society where there are various ethics or tribes within a constituency, the representative may not be able to avoid the contestation or coming out every time to explain to them why he took decisions as the best for their interest. The substantive representation seems to support elitism, which is the government ruled by the elite of wisdom, affluence, and reason, but Pitkin debunked this by saying that substantive representation is not about leaving matters to

⁵³ Pitkin, p.144

⁵⁴ Pitkin, p.212

experts. Rather, it involves one who has the people's best interest and where decisions are not arbitrary.⁵⁵ Considering the four views of representation, Pitkin needed to explain to us how the various views fit together. Pitkin is aware that her view of substantive representation would have some limitations, so she recommends that when substantive acting for others becomes impossible, we can return to other representation views.⁵⁶ She suggests a more positive definition of the activity and its specific relation to political life.

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS OF REPRESENTATION

Let us now turn to some contemporary theorists whose works we consider as being really relevant for better understanding of political representation as we would later relate them to the next chapter. Melissa Williams calls us to envision the activities of representation and understand it as mediation; in other words, political representatives must mediate or be mediators.⁵⁷ A representative should consider the voice of the voiceless, the trust of the people, and their memories. She opines that the legislative institutions should comprise individuals who have direct access to historically excluded people or ideas, such as the disadvantaged group, and ideas that bring about exclusion, such as women not being allowed into some political and economic positions. Admittedly, knowledge of historical people or ideas could help us understand representation as a mediator and a voice for the disadvantaged.

Williams argues that representation is also a representative-constituent relation that concerns the necessity of a representative building a relationship with the constituents and gaining their trust. Such a relationship and gain of trust will enable the representative to be a mediator. Williams considered how African-Americans have not been truly represented by the white citizens in the Chamber. When there is relationship distrust, it can "at least partially be mended if the disadvantaged group is represented by its own members."⁵⁸ This could be likened to the descriptive view of representation. Even though it may be argued that the representation of the

⁵⁵ Pitkin, 212

⁵⁶ Pitkin, 210

⁵⁷ Melissa Williams, (1998). *Voice, Trust, and Memory: Marginalized Groups and the Failings of Liberal Representation*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p.8

⁵⁸ Williams, p.14

disadvantaged groups in this sense may not totally solve the challenge of them being disadvantaged, however, we must agree that it at least reduces all the forms of discrimination against the group, hence the perception of representation as being a political mediator.

Another theorist of representation is Nadia Urbinati who argues the concept of representation from the perspective of advocacy. She identifies two components of advocacy: first is the representative's passionate link to the elector's cause and the representative's relative autonomy of judgment. The second is that advocacy gives representative firm conviction and thus nurtures the spirit of controversy or agonism.⁵⁹ She believes that advocacy entails the representatives will need to share the vision and ideals of their constituencies. However, it also entails representatives needing to enjoy a certain degree of autonomy.⁶⁰ This is similar to Pitkin's substantive representation, yet it is different as Urbinati argues that it is within an agnostic model that the theory of representation as advocacy acquires its relevance,⁶¹ moreover, advocacy is not opposed to deliberation.⁶² Urbinati is concerned about what the citizens should look out for when electing their representatives. They should look out for representatives who, even when they will enjoy certain autonomous judgments, should have their interests at heart and who would also allow for deliberation and contestation. For this reason, she did argued that the tension between the commitment to the elector's cause and a representative's autonomous judgment, which animates advocacy, exemplifies the character of representative democracy.⁶³

It is pertinent to mention that Urbinati does not subscribe to descriptive view of representation, as she argues that in an election, advocacy entails a selection of seeking to get the best defendant or advocate, and not a copy of ourselves.⁶⁴ Thus, the citizen should be able to evaluate the agnosticism of various political parties and individuals involved and then reach a conclusion about whom to elect to represent them. Urbinati provided us with an understanding of the importance of contested opinions and the consent formation of electors; also, her views improve our understanding of deliberative democracy.

⁵⁹ Nadia Urbinati, (2000). "Representation as Advocacy: A Study of Democratic Deliberation," *Political Theory*, 28: 773

⁶⁰ Urbinati, p. 777

⁶¹ Urbinati, p. 775

⁶² Urbinati, p. 775

⁶³ Urbinati, p. 774

⁶⁴ Urbinati, p. 776

Iris Marion Young is another theorist who provided the concept of representation. She views representation as a differentiated relationship.⁶⁵ She conceives of representation as recognizing the diversity of those represented, such as class, sex, race, and gender; she emphasizes the importance of addressing those differences to achieve justice and equality. Thus, Young's concept advances for inclusivity and equitability as features of political representation. Young went further to offer us an alternative account of political representation, which she calls a dynamic process. What does this mean? Representation is a process that moves between moments of authorization and accountability.⁶⁶ This is similar to the formalistic view, with a difference of allowing for authorization and accountability to work hand in hand, that is, operating within the political representation because it makes provision for citizens so that through election they authorize their representatives to act in their behalf, and they could also hold the representatives accountable on how much he represented them. We would agree that this way of looking at representation could really bring forth citizenry political consciousness and participation in a democratic system.

Another Scholar who speaks on representation is Suzanne Dovi in her book *The Good Representative*. Dovi's concept is important to us here as she seems to lead us into the marriage of political philosophy and ethics, in other words, political representation and the ethics of representation, as she is concerned with the good representation. Her discourse will help contribute to this work as it concerns standard and evaluation of political representative. She believes that we need to understand that there must be more to what it means to represent democratically. Dovi is interested in the ethics of democratic representation, which focuses on the proper criteria for assessing democratic representatives and identifying good representatives.⁶⁷ She invites us to examine the question of who is a good representative, and she argues that a representative acts as a good democratic representative only if her advocacy work fosters the norms and values distinctive of the democratic institution;⁶⁸ moreover, these norms and values are civic equality, self-governance, and inclusion.⁶⁹ Dovi argues that a democratic country should enjoy self-governance; the citizens should be able to enjoy political equality

⁶⁵ Iris Marion Young, (2000). *Inclusion and Democracy*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 125-127

⁶⁶ Young, p.129

⁶⁷ Suzanne Dovi, (2007). "*The Good Representative*" (New York: Blackwell Publishing), p.6

⁶⁸ Dovi., p.2

⁶⁹ Dovi, p.3

without discrimination based on gender or race, making it an inclusive democratic representation. Democratic representation consists of advancing public policies in ways that are properly sensitive to civic equality, guarding against social and economic privileges that promote inequalities.⁷⁰

Dovi recommends three virtues of democratic representation: fair-mindedness, critical trust-building, and good gatekeeping. She argues that democratic representation aims to preserve civic equality. Good democratic representatives are those that manifest three virtues, corresponding to the three aspects of democratic advocacy: “the virtue of fair-mindedness, through which a representative contributes to the realization of the value of civic equality; the virtue of critical trust building, through which a representative contributes to the realization of self-governance; and, finally, the virtue of good gatekeeping, through which a representative contributes to the realization of inclusion.”⁷¹ Dovi argues that only democratic citizens ought to prefer political representation that only has these three virtues, and this is evident because it would be right if a citizen chooses representatives who advocate fairness and inclusivity and build representative-constituent trust.

From the above, it is evident that the concept of representation is challenging to be limited to a particular view. We have seen political representation as formalistic, descriptive, symbolic, substantive, mediator, and advocacy, and an overview of all these reveals that it is problematic to submerge all the views; however, just like Pitkin, we would suggest when an application to any of the views did not work, we can result to others while advancing to a more positive definition of the activities of political representation.

⁷⁰ Dovi, p.90

⁷¹ Dovi, p.90

2. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN NIGERIA

Nigeria is a large West African country covering 356,668 square miles.⁷² Nigeria's diverse geography yields a broad assortment of natural resources. Mineral wealth includes large deposits of coal, iron, tin, columbite, lead, copper, and zinc found in the middle belt's hills and plateaus. Small amounts of gold, silver, and diamonds have also been discovered in various places. The resource that causes much concern and problems among political representatives is crude oil or the petroleum reserves, and since 1970, petroleum has become the most important single commodity in the country's economy, and the country realizes over 90 percent of her export earnings and over 75 percent of public revenue.⁷³ The large dependency on petroleum has caused high levels of corruption among government officials who ought to represent the people, thereby making sustainable development problematic. Further, it brings extreme poverty to the majority of Nigeria's citizens.⁷⁴

Nigeria has a diverse population of over 218.5 million, which consists of over 200 different ethno-linguistic groups, with English as the official language since 1960. It has three major ethnic groups comprising most of the population. The Hausa located in the northern part of the country is roughly 21 percent, the Yoruba in the southwestern part is roughly 20 percent, and the Igbo in the southeastern part is roughly 17 percent.⁷⁵ Religion has a role in Nigerian politics; hence, we cannot separate both. The country belongs to many religions. However, the vast majority identify either with Islam or Christianity.

The British amalgamated the northern and southern parts of the country in 1914 in order to form a unified colonial state⁷⁶ and named this unified state Nigeria. We would not be going into the discourse of if the British indeed came to teach the people of Nigeria how to rule and represent her people. However, it is pertinent to say that the idea of a political system and representation is not alien to Nigeria. In precolonial Nigeria, different societies had their political system and political representations. The Yoruba had a monarchical system of governance, with many

⁷² Toyin Falola & Mathew M. Heaton, (2008). *A History of Nigeria* (Cambridge: University Press), p.2

⁷³ Folola & Heaton, p.3

⁷⁴ Folola & Heaton, p.3

⁷⁵ Folola & Heaton, p.4

⁷⁶ Folola & Heaton, p.6

villages having their (*oba*) kings; however, since they had an Oyo Empire being the strongest political part of the Yorubaland, with the supreme and most powerful king called *Alafin* “whose office had supreme authority, and he could make policy decisions, order executions and create and confer titles.”⁷⁷ So, in what sense was there representation? The king in the Yorubaland symbolizes unity, likening to the symbolic representation discussed by Pitkin, which we already discussed in the previous chapter. There was also a legislative body called the Oyo Mesi, which was the organization of chiefs and elders from various communities in the Yorubaland to represent the interest of the people and served as the chief advisory body to the *Alafin*, custodian of religious centers, approves the choice of new *Alafin*, and could enact regime change by ordering an ineffective *Alafin* to vacate the throne and commit suicide.⁷⁸

Similarly, the Hausa in northern Nigeria had a centralized system and operated a monarchy. Before the Jihad that Islamized the northern part of the country, the Hausa had seven states, each with a king called *Serkin*, who had political authority and made laws regarding the economy of the state.⁷⁹ Migrants from western Sudan and nomadic Fulani Pastoralists brought trade and Islam to the North. They later fought the Hausa in a war, and they imposed Islam as the official religion. The Fulanis took over the political system and introduced a monarchical governance mixed with theocracy, called an emirate with a king known as an Emir, who derived his authority from the Quran and support of the Fulani ruling class. He also appointed governors and had a council with whom he consulted before making decisions.⁸⁰ The political representation within this region can be referred to as symbolic representation, as the Emir symbolizes unity and God's authority over his people.

The Igbo of southeastern modern-day Nigeria had a decentralized state system.⁸¹ However, a small community among the Igbo borrowed a monarchical system from a minor ethnic group and was centralized. However, the Igbo society was generally known for being a decentralized political institution with the political authority founded on an age-based hierarchy at the village

⁷⁷ Folola & Heaton, p.49

⁷⁸ Folola & Heaton, p.50

⁷⁹ Folola & Heaton, p.27

⁸⁰ Yusuf Bala Usman, 1981. *The Transformation of Katsina, 1400–1883: The Emergence and Overthrow of the Sarauta System and the Establishment of the Emirate* (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press), pp.56-58

⁸¹ Elizabeth Isichei, 1976. *A History of the Igbo People* (London: Macmillan), p.30

levels, that is, "elders, defined as the heads of patrilineal lines, were responsible for the most important decisions of a community."⁸² This means the Igbo resided in autonomous villages and towns, and each had an assembly of elders that governed them, with decisions reached by consensus. This was their form of political representation, as the Council of Elders represents the interests of the people, and decisions reached must align with the interests of the people.

2.1 NIGERIA'S POST-INDEPENDENCE POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Since its independence in 1960, the Federal Republic of Nigeria has had several political systems with a mix of democratic and military rule, with various constitutions and systems of political representation. It has had five major political systems, namely, the First Republic (1960-1966), the Military Rule (1966-1979), the Second Republic (1979-1983), the Military Rule again (1983-1999), and the Fourth Republic (1999 until date). We shall consider these, but considering what we just listed, it is obvious that we did not mention the third republic, so what happened to it? Nigeria only had an attempted third republic because the military canceled the democratic election, and the military continued ruling; this we shall discuss further during this exposition.

2.2 POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE FIRST REPUBLIC 1960-1966

Nigeria gained independence from the British in 1960. Before granting independence to the country, the British colonialists used the years 1954-1959 to prepare Nigerians for a new political system.⁸³ Political representation was through three main political parties: the Northern People's Congress (NPC), the National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC), and the Action Group. Each party represents three main ethnic groups in Nigeria: Hausa-Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the southwest, and the Igbo in the southeast, respectively. In 1957, elections were held, and the Northern region had 52 percent of the seats in Parliament (House of Representatives), largely due to its population.⁸⁴ The Prime Minister was to be elected by the

⁸² Folola & Heaton, p.22

⁸³ Eghosa E. Osaghae, (1998). *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence* (Indiana: Indiana University Press), p.11

⁸⁴ Osaghae, p.11

members of the Parliament, so the office of the Prime Minister was created.⁸⁵ In 1960, the colonialists declared Nigeria an independent federation with a parliamentary governance system, which was considered the First Republic. However, some argue that Nigeria became a republic in 1963, and this was because the country had the First Republican constitution in 1963. The First Republic had a Prime Minister with an executive power as Head of Government and a President who was a ceremonial Head of State. A regional government was also part of the system. The country has three largely autonomous regions, each with its constitution, public service, and judiciary.⁸⁶

The regions were so powerful, which was the effect of the pre-independence 1954 constitution, which introduced and gave regions wide-ranging powers. The regions became "the principal arena of politics, the field where the actions are."⁸⁷ What does this mean? It invariably means that the regions had so much power, and decisions to affect political and economic sustainability lie in the hands of the regions governed by their regional premiers. It appeared as though the federal government was nonexistent. It appeared that three countries were bearing Nigeria, and the country's unity was not seen. What could be done to ensure a more proper political involvement of the federal government in the governance of regions? A 1963 Republican constitution was introduced, allowing the federal government to declare a state of emergency in any part of the country, control the policies and armed forces, and determine fiscal relations and economic planning.⁸⁸ Was this helpful in regard to political representation? It was challenging because the Prime Minister was from the North, and the North had 52 percent of the seats in the Parliament, with people from the South embittered that the northern leaders used the country's resources to the advantage of the northern region. The politics in Nigeria became vividly ethnopolitics. If decisions were to be taken on a federal level, those from Southern regions were usually afraid because the President had no executive power, nor did they have many seats to ensure the betterment of their regions from the federal budgets.

The First Republic had a complex political structure that deterred proper political participation. There were frictions between the President and the Prime Minister, as the President felt he was

⁸⁵ Osaghae, p.11

⁸⁶ Osaghae, p.34

⁸⁷ Billy J. Dudley, (1982). *An Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics* (London: McMillian), p.52

⁸⁸ Osaghae, p.34

not representing the people, especially the South, and he was especially not content with being a figurehead.⁸⁹ Similarly, the two other regions, Southwest and Southeast, always tried to get more seats in the Parliament. The fear of being dominated by another region lingered throughout this period, as ethnic and religious groups feared that the region that obtained government control would use it at the expense of the rest of the country. It was this fear that led to the rigging of the 1964 and 1965 elections, which caused widespread communal violence. In 1966, Nigeria had its first military coup as the military dissolved the First Republic.⁹⁰

2.3. The Merits of Political Representation in the First Republic of Nigeria

The First Republic recorded some success in political representation in Nigeria's political system.

1. Regional representation: The First Republic introduced political representation of different regions. It was intended to ensure citizens' ethnic and regional interests were represented in the political system. It is pertinent to say that different regions already had their political system before independence, so considering how to bring those regions together as one Nigeria and have them represented was a foundation for post-independence political representation.

2. Inclusivity: The First Republic set the pace for the growth of democracy with the introduction of an electoral system to enable the citizens to elect their representatives and foster political participation.

3. Education and Commerce: The First Republic impacted education and commerce. The University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in the Eastern Region; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in the Northern Region and the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, in the Western Region, were all established in the First Republic with the Western Region introducing free education policy.

In commerce, there was growth in the agricultural produce in the country as there was trans-regional trade, and Nigeria was producing cocoa and using the resources to fund projects. The

⁸⁹ Osaghae, p.34

⁹⁰ Folola & Heaton, p.13

First Republic also built Liberty Stadium, the first to be constructed in Nigeria and Africa in 1960.⁹¹

2.4. The Deficiencies of Political Representation in the First Republic of Nigeria

The First Republic was characterized by political instabilities and deficiencies that impeded the country's unity and deterred political and economic growth. Let us briefly examine some of the noticeable deficiencies of how poorly the political representation was.

1. Ethnic baiting: The First Republic was characterized by ethnic oriented political system, which we could call ethnopolitics. The dominance of the three major groups in politics only brought about friction among political representatives, not a conflict that challenged them to do better in their reprehensive regions; rather, it widened the country's national unity and stiffened political and economic development and sustainability.

2. Rigged elections: Since the political system was ethnic and religious-oriented, the northern region always did all it could to remain in power while the southern regions felt embittered. The crude oil, the major source of finance, is located in the South, but the economic benefits were shared across the country. Unfortunately, the Parliament determined the system of sharing, which the northern politicians largely dominated. The North will have a large share, and to ensure a stop to this and aversion of other benefits to the North, the Southern regions tried to secure more seats while the Northern region also had their plans, all pointing towards election rigging. The southwest and southeast regions were embittered, especially the southeast region, which felt they were neglected in the fair political dealings of the country.⁹² How can we speak of politicians being representatives if election rigging was their target? Is it not the case of selfishness or personal interest that made the political representatives sought after election rigging?

⁹¹ Vanguard, October 1, 2020. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/10/independence-what-made-western-nigeria-tick-in-the-first-republic/>

⁹² Folola & Heaton, p.172

3. Corruption: One of the biggest issues of political representation in the First Republic was described as the case of official corruption.⁹³ The political representatives sought after their selfish interests, and under the disguise of fighting for their region, they failed to represent the interests of their people. It was a system of power tussle to remain in parliament seats, and sadly, there was no proper form of accountability. Thus, it was more like an authoritative representation, which we discussed in the previous chapter. The political representatives of the First Republic displayed corruption and undemocratic tendencies.⁹⁴

4. Lack of Inclusivity: It has been obvious that the First Republic was characterized by the three major political parties mainly representing the major ethnic groups in Nigeria. Is it the case that there were no small political parties? It is their business to develop a political strategy to gain popular votes in the Parliament. However, another question will be, was it not the case that there were minority groups in the country? Who politically represented their interest? This was the case of the need for more inclusivity in the country's political structure.

The First Republic can be likened to formalistic representation, particularly the authoritative part, which indicated institutional authority to represent. Unfortunately, the system was marked with ethnic dominance, which stiffened the unity and development of the country, leading to the military coup of 1966.

2.5. MILITARY INTERVENTION 1966-1979

Nigeria's post-independence political history was largely marked by military intervention in policies, and their modes of intervention were coups, counter-coups, civil war, and military governance.⁹⁵ On January 15, 1966, Nigeria's first military coup began and was led by five majors from southern Nigeria, with Major Kaduna Ezeogwu as the leader. They claimed their goal was to end tribalism, nepotism, regionalism, and corruption that characterized the First

⁹³ Folola & Heaton, p.159

⁹⁴ Folola & Heaton, p.13

⁹⁵ Osaghae, p.54

Republic.⁹⁶ They claimed to want to save the country from imminent collapse, disintegration, and economic mismanagement of civilian governance.⁹⁷

These five majors arrested the Prime Minister and the Regional Premiers. They murdered the Prime Minister, with Regional Premiers from the northern and southwestern regions whom the majors believed were involved in the election chaos of 1964 and 1965.⁹⁸ Many northern military officers were also murdered in the coup. The question that readily comes to mind is: Can this be a good political representation and national unity the coup's perpetrators claimed to bring? The coup was not completely successful, as more chaos was mounting, and then Major General John Aguiyi-Ironsi from the South took over to restore peace. He abolished regionalism and introduced a military head of state, but unfortunately, he surrounded himself with military officers from the South, which again shows nepotism and a poor representation system. The northern military officers felt the coup was South domination over the North, especially the southeast. A few of them planned and murdered Aguiyi-Ironsi and made one of theirs, Lieutenant Yakubu Gowon, the new Military Head of State. A decision that made the southeast military officers embittered, especially the Eastern Military Governor, Lieutenant Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, who questioned the legitimacy of the new Head of State and decided the Southeast region would secede from Nigeria by declaring Independence of the Eastern Region, which he called the Independent Republic of Biafra.⁹⁹ Resolving the conflict proved abortive, leading to a civil war. Gowon changed the currency of the country to the naira and made transportation of food to the southeast impossible, so it weakened the resilience of the people, with millions of the southeasterners, that is, the Igbo, being killed during the war while some died out of hunger. In December 1969, Ojukwu fled the country to Ivory Coast, and in January 1970, the so-called Biafra collapsed, and the southeasterners, the Igbo, surrendered.¹⁰⁰

After the war, regionalism, corruption, and mismanagement of national revenues remained.¹⁰¹ Gowon ought to have handed over to a democratic government in 1976 but announced he would not as he does not trust politicians. While abroad, there was a counter-coup bringing in Murtala

⁹⁶ Folola & Heaton, p.172; Osaghae, p.57

⁹⁷ Osaghae, p.54

⁹⁸ Folola & Heaton, p.172

⁹⁹ Folola & Heaton, p.175

¹⁰⁰ Folola & Heaton, p.178

¹⁰¹ Folola & Heaton, pp.182-187

Muhammed as the Head of State, and he tried to salvage the country and announced his intention to hand over to civilians, but was murdered. At the same time, his deputy, General Olusegun Obasanjo, took over and handed the power to civilians through an election of 1979, which will mark the Second Republic.

From the preceding, can we say that the military governance had political representation? In what sense can political representation be deduced? One could argue that they had formalistic representation, given their power and authority. The first coup was designed as what the country needed to restore order and bring forth unity. So many Nigerians did not protest against it until it showed traces of another regionalism or sectionalism. So, the argument for political representation may be illogical to conclude given the fact that it was characterized by the acquisition of power through coup and counter-coup, with no consideration for human lives, as many were killed in all of these.

2.6. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC 1979-1983

The Second Republic marked the beginning of a new political system, the presidential system with a constitution that allowed the President and vice president to become the heads of the executive council in the country. The presidential system allowed a four-year power term to foster democratic stability.¹⁰² President Shehu Shagari became the executive Head of State. The Second Republic had a bicameral legislature, which comprised the Senate in the upper chamber and the House of Representatives in the lower chamber, and both made up the national representative body called the National Assembly¹⁰³ where bills that ought to be in the people's interests are discussed. On the state level, the system was a unicameral chamber called the House of Assembly¹⁰⁴ which had representatives from various local governments to represent the interests of their constituencies. The Second Republic also introduced separation of power between the executive, legislators, and judiciary, with a system of checks and balances.¹⁰⁵ It also introduced the Federal Character Principle, a quota system of ministerial and other top

¹⁰² Osaghae, p.143

¹⁰³ Osaghae, p.114

¹⁰⁴ Osaghae, p.114

¹⁰⁵ Osaghae, p.143

government appointments, the composition of the armed forces, public services, and other government agencies being beneficial to all states. Would it not be right to say this is what democracy looks like, and would we not agree that this will enable good political representation in the country? Alas, rather than answering the question, we should ask the question: Did the political representatives or political actors of the Second Republic ensure the success of the checks and balances? Let us examine how the political representative had their dealings in the Second Republic.

The Second Republic was marked by massive corruption among political representatives, especially at the federal level. With the approval of the legislative arm of government, the Federal Government committed over 2 million naira to a housing project, and this project was executed by party members from the legislature who automatically turned contractors.¹⁰⁶ There were other projects the political representatives approved and hijacked to their selfish interest, so the contracts were done shoddily or not accomplished at all.¹⁰⁷ These representatives ought to be pursuing the good interests of their constituencies. Why can't they award the project to competent contractors who know their work will be checked? An audit of Nigerian External Telecommunications revealed that N53 million and N43 million disappeared from the federal housing scheme.¹⁰⁸ Since Nigeria had petroleum sales as one of its major economic strengths, government funds were mismanaged, and even in the increasing economic recession, political representatives at all levels indulged in reckless spending, corruption, and awarding contracts only to party members. Political representatives became richer while those they represented suffered from employment, and workers were even being retrenched in large numbers, and their salaries were not paid, yet the masses were told to be patient and make sacrifices for good governance.¹⁰⁹

After the first four-year term, there was an election in 1983, and many political parties sought to win the electorates over to their side. President Shehu Shagari returned as the elected President, and his political party, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), won a majority of the senatorial and House of Representatives seats, making political decisions much easier to perpetuate corruption.

¹⁰⁶ Osaghae, p.158

¹⁰⁷ Folola & Heaton, p.202

¹⁰⁸ Folola & Heaton, p.202

¹⁰⁹ Osaghae, p.154

The elections were widely believed to be characterized by violence, rigging, and bribery by all parties.¹¹⁰ After the elections, the economic life of the people continued to deteriorate as the corruption of the political representatives continued at the expense of their constituents. Representatives from NPN were noticeable business people who viewed politics as a means of enriching themselves, coming together under patronage and mutual advantage.¹¹¹ The people got frustrated with the corrupt system, and they began protesting. The military was waiting for this opportunity before they could intervene. On December 31, 1983, the military once again stepped into democratic governance and overthrew the Second Republic.¹¹² General Ibrahim Babaginda stated: "We in the military waited for an opportunity...we do not intervene when we know the climate is not good for it or the public will not welcome it."¹¹³

2.7. The Merits of Political Representation in the Second Republic of Nigeria

1. Presidential System: The Second Republic introduced the presidential system with an elected president and vice president. This helped to end the friction between the Prime Minister and President in the First Republic. It also allows for a four-year term in power in order to foster democratic stability and allows for citizens to evaluate and elect their representatives.

2. Legislative Structure: The Second Republic enables the citizens to elect their representatives in the legislative arm of government, both in the Senate and House of Representatives on the federal level, and representatives from various local governments on the state level. This was a way to foster political participation, and the citizens could evaluate and elect their representatives for a four-year term.

3. Separation of Power: The Second Republic also introduced the separation of power between the three arms of government: the legislature, executive, and judiciary, and they operated a system of checks and balances.

¹¹⁰ Karl Maier, *The House Has Fallen*, (Spectrum Books Ltd, Nigeria, 2000), pp.58-59; Eghosa, p.150

¹¹¹ Osaghae, p.154

¹¹² Osaghae, p.154

¹¹³ Maier, pp.58-59

4. Inclusivity: The Second Republic also introduced a Federal Character Principle to allow civic equality for all the states in Nigeria to share whatever benefits come from the federal government.

2.8. The Deficiencies of Political Representation in the Second Republic of Nigeria

There were quite several deficiencies noticeable in the Second Republic that undermined political representation.

1. Corruption: The Second Republic was characterized by a high level of corruption exhibited by the political class elected to represent the people's interests. Politics became a business venture where business people came in to get projects and award contracts to themselves, especially among NPN, the ruling party of the Second Republic. The country's economy could not be salvaged due largely to the desperate level of corruption of party members and government officials elected to represent the interests of their various constituencies.

2. Lack of Accountability: The Second Republic had many projects and awarded many contracts, which were also executed by representatives who claimed to be contractors yet did poor work and, in some cases, never accomplished the work. The government sought foreign aid in billions of naira from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It secured an N400 million loan from Saudi Arabia.¹¹⁴ Unfortunately, there was no accountability for all the money. There ought to be checks and balances between the arms of government; however, given all the money gotten from foreign aid or from the loans, the legislature failed to check the excesses of the executive arm and request for accountability. Many of the political representatives in the Second Republic were representing their business interests of enriching themselves at the expense of their various constituencies.

3. Insensitivity to the people's plight: The Second Republic was marked by political representatives who were insensitive to the economic plights of the people. There was a recession that caused economic hardship, an increment in the unemployment rate, and retrenchment of jobs, and workers were owed their salaries. However, the political class spent

¹¹⁴ Folola & Heaton, p.204

recklessly on themselves with public funds and even borrowed from the IMF with no accountability for what and the money was spent. Sadly, when the people lamented to their political representatives, they were told to exercise patience and make the sacrifice of bearing the pain¹¹⁵ while awaiting something positive that never came. Political representatives should be truly sensitive to the people's plight. It should not be too much to request that politicians' salaries and the cost of governance be cut down. The political representatives should make sacrifices on their path to ensure a better life for their various constituencies

4. Election Rigging: The 1983 elections were marked with rigging, violence, and bribery.¹¹⁶ Some of the electorates were struggling to have what to eat, so it was easy to bribe them as politicians tried to buy the loyalty of votes from their constituents.¹¹⁷ If political representatives fulfill the promise to represent their constituents truly, there will not be the need to bribe to win the next elections. Unfortunately, some electorates will still vote and help to rig the elections in favor of their representatives. The election rigging became an indicator that the civilians were incapable of conducting free and fair elections in Nigeria. Given the protest of the masses due to election rigging and especially economic hardship, the military struck and overthrew the Second Republic.

The Second Republic had exciting plans to eliminate or reduce the fear of dominance by particular ethnic groups. However, some ethnic-regional patterns were seen in the electorate's behavior in different parts of the country, as some still appealed to or voted for a candidate from their ethnic group.¹¹⁸ Admittedly, the Second Republic brought positive constitutional changes and introduced the presidential system. However, sadly, it was marked by high levels of corruption, mismanagement of public funds, lack of accountability, and insensitivity to the people's plight, leading to protests and military intervention, which marked the end of the Second Republic in 1983.

¹¹⁵ Osaghae, p.154

¹¹⁶ Maier, pp.58-59

¹¹⁷ Folola & Heaton, p.202

¹¹⁸ Osaghae, p.151

2.9. THE SECOND MILITARY RULE 1983-1999

The Second Republic ended with the military coup of 1983. Some African Scholars believed that the military had tasted power after its intervention in 1966 and accumulated wealth for themselves.¹¹⁹ In December 1983, the second military rule began with a coup that brought General Muhammadu Buhari as the Head of State. The military rule lasted for 13 years, and three military regimes ruled this period, namely, Buhari, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babaginda (IBB), and General Sani Abacha, before Nigeria returned to Democratic rule. The three regimes oversaw the further decline of the Nigerian economy. They were characterized by their high levels of violence and coercion because of their willingness to suppress anyone or organization criticizing them. They carry out the suppression under the pretense of promoting stability.¹²⁰

The first of the three regimes was that of Buhari, who came to power by justifying their coup with the corruption of the Shagari administration and its failure to monitor the country's economy. Buhari believed that the problem of Nigeria's politics was about implementation and the need for political representatives to have more will to govern and represent the people ethically.¹²¹ Wasn't he right about this claim? We would agree with him that there were no ethics of political representation in Nigeria. Buhari reduced government expenditure and decreed that the state government pay arrears of salaries to the government employees who were owed for several months by the Second Republic. He set up a panel to probe governors and other officials of the Second Republic for their widespread abuse and embezzlement of public funds.¹²² Those convicted were sentenced to long-term imprisonment or asked to refund their misappropriation to the state,¹²³this made some politicians flee the country.¹²⁴ He also set up a body of social reform called War Against Indiscipline (WAI) to achieve work ethics, patriotism, nationalism, anti-corruption, and patience¹²⁵ which will help sanitize the political and economic life of the country.

¹¹⁹ Braj Ibrahim, (2014). *The Nigerian Military: Origins, Politics and Capital Accumulation*. (Ibadan: Univeristy Press Ibadan, Nigeria), p.67; Siollun Max, (2009). *Oil, Politics & Violence: Nigeria's Military Coup Culture (1966-1976)*. (New York: Algora Publishing), Pp.51-203

¹²⁰ Folola & Heaton, p.210

¹²¹ Folola & Heaton, p.212

¹²² Osaghae, p.154

¹²³ Osaghae, p.154

¹²⁴ Folola & Heaton, p.213; Osaghae, p.154

¹²⁵ Folola & Heaton, p.214

Buhari's regime was concerned with fighting corruption, which was huge, but did little to improve the economic life of the people as there were high levels of hardship and the people were complaining, which was due to the mismanagement of the Second Republic. Buhari was unwilling to institute Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) as required by the IMF as a condition for the deal of rescheduling Nigeria's external debt. He refused because SAP was open to privatizing public organizations and properties. By 1985, the federal government had already spent 38.7 percent of its total revenue on serving debts.¹²⁶ Tragically, a counter-coup brought in Babaginda and instituted SAP so Nigeria could reschedule her debt, which will be paid in the future. He was authoritarian but with a feigned interest in public opinion.¹²⁷ He was supposed to hand over power to democratic rule, but he was accused of consistently manipulating the transition. He finally allowed the institution of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to conduct elections upon which he would hand over power. On June 12, 1993, the Presidential election was held. Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola (MKO Abiola) won the election with 56 percent votes. However, Babaginda annulled the election and accused Abiola of causing ethnic discord and vote buying. The election is widely considered to have been the fairest, freest, and most peaceful election in the history of Nigeria to date.¹²⁸ It is possible that Babaginda has already tasted the financial benefits of being in power and does not want to hand over. The annulment would mean a continuation of military rule. However, Nigerians protested, and he provided an interim government to prepare for the Third Republic.

2.10. ATTEMPTED THIRD REPUBLIC AND MILITARY RULE

Babaginda brought in his friend Sir Ernest Shonekan as Interim Governing Council (IGC) on August 27, 1993, the same day Abiola would have been inaugurated. The Lagos High Court declared IGC as illegal and unconstitutional and upheld MKO Abiola as the winner of the presidential election, a decision which did not go down well with IGC.¹²⁹ General Sani Abacha saw it as an opportunity for another coup, and of course, he did. He abolished all existing political institutions and imprisoned former military Head of State, Olusegun Obasanjo, his

¹²⁶ Folola & Heaton, p.216

¹²⁷ Folola & Heaton, p.216

¹²⁸ Folola & Heaton, p.227

¹²⁹ Folola & Heaton, pp.228-229

deputy, Shehu Yar'Adua, and any other who opposed him.¹³⁰ This was why Nigerians do not often count the Third Republic among its political systems; it was never successful, as no one was constitutionally inaugurated as the Democratic President.

MKO Abiola was, however, furious with all that was happening. Since the High Court already declared him the winner of the presidential election, he ignored the military rule of Abacha. He declared himself the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Abacha responded swiftly and brutally by ordering his arrest and held without bail pending trial, and unfortunately, Abiola died in prison in 1998.¹³¹ Nigerians clamored for democratic rule, and Abacha agreed, but he managed to force five political parties to nominate him as their presidential candidate, which would automatically make him the President. Before he could achieve his political fantasy, he had a heart attack and died on June 8, 1998. General Abdulsalami Abubakar took over and abolished the five parties, released many of those imprisoned by Abacha, and instigated the Abacha regime, which shows he embezzled an estimated \$3 billion saved in various bank accounts around the world, of which Nigeria negotiated with those banks to return the stolen funds to use it to service foreign debt.¹³²

Abubakar set up a process for the transition to democratic rule. Elections were conducted on February 27, 1999, with Olusegun Obasanjo as the winner of the presidential election and his Vice Atiku Abubakar. Olusegun belonged to the People Democratic Party (PDP), and they got 62 percent of the vote; they emerged as the winner of the presidential election, and the PDP won the majority seats in the Senate and House of Representatives.¹³³ The elections were relatively peaceful, with few accusations of election rigging. On May 29, 1999, Olusegun Obasanjo was sworn in as the President of the Fourth Republic, with Atiku Abubakar as his vice president.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Folola & Heaton, p.230

¹³¹ Folola & Heaton, p.231

¹³² Folola & Heaton, p.234

¹³³ Folola & Heaton, p.235

¹³⁴ Folola & Heaton, p.235

2.11. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

The general election and 1999 Nigeria Constitution make the beginning of the Fourth Republic the longest and current political governance. Political representation in the Fourth Republic has been marked by both progress and great challenges. The Fourth Republic marks a new democratization of the country, which means the fall of the authoritarian regime, consolidation, and enduring democracy.¹³⁵ The Fourth Republic began with the presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo and his party, the People Democratic Party (PDP), winning the majority in the Senate and House of Representatives. Nigeria's Fourth Republic has witnessed many elections and is yet to show the profound endurance of growing democracy. All the elections were marked with controversies, and their processes and end products encountered credibility and legitimacy crises.¹³⁶ The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), responsible for conducting elections in the country, was criticized by the European Union (EU), Commonwealth monitoring group, and the US-based International Republican Institute, which often report Nigeria's election as seriously flawed.¹³⁷

Since 1999, the effectiveness of Nigeria's political representations has been generating concern among political analysts, scholars, and other stakeholders.¹³⁸ How have our elected political representatives represented the will of the people? Political representatives have been called out to carry out the expected accountability act. By accountability, we mean the answerability for the performance of public officials and institutes.¹³⁹ Admittedly, within the first few years of the Fourth Republic, the country's economy grew, allowing the government to pay off a large part of its foreign debt from \$35 billion to \$5 billion to the World Bank and private sector creditors.¹⁴⁰ However, the Fourth Republic has been marked with a lot of mismanagement of public funds.

The legislature is responsible for making laws for good governance and exercising its power and functions according to the people's will. However, they have been marked with corruption and

¹³⁵ Gunther, R.P.N, P.N. Diamandurous, and H.J. Puhle (eds.). 1995. *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, in Dhikru Adewale Yagboyaju, "Nigeria's Fourth Republic and the Challenge of a Faltering Democratization," *Africa Studies Quarterly* 12 (3), summer 2011, p.94

¹³⁶ Yagboyaju, p.93

¹³⁷ Yagboyaju, p.99; Folola & Heaton, p.275

¹³⁸ Omololu & Mojeed, p.40

¹³⁹ Omololu & Mojeed, p.42

¹⁴⁰ Folola & Heaton, p.236

insensitivities to the plight of Nigerians. Nigerian legislature is the most expensive in the world.¹⁴¹ However, Nigeria is among the very poor countries with a minimum wage of N30,000 and recently approved to N70,000 (\$42).¹⁴² When the Nigerian legislature is called the most expensive in the world, what is considered is the legislature's salaries and allowances in relation to its citizens' minimum wage. How can the political representatives justify their salaries as worthwhile? In 2010, the lower chamber requested a new quarterly allocation of N42 million each, which is separate from their salary of about N1.3 million each.¹⁴³ This shows that some of the allowances are not captured in the payment given to legislatures.¹⁴⁴ This is just the demand of the lower chamber; obviously, the demand of the Senate will be higher. This indicates a politics of self-interest and amassment of wealth through political positions. In 2024, the lowest a senator will get as basic annual salary is N2.03 million, with a total allowance of N72,137,440 for each.¹⁴⁵ A country suffering an economic crisis keeps borrowing money from the World Bank and China to fund its excessiveness. The pertinent question is, what are they really doing to deserve such a huge salary and allowances? The reasons for some of the allowances are not disclosed, but the money is allotted.¹⁴⁶

There have been situations where the state budgets were estimated for the supposed good of the people but were slashed by the State House of Assembly, while the state legislatures increased their allocations without convincing reasons.¹⁴⁷ This is a case of insensitivity to the good of the people. The President and governors still have access to unspecified amounts of money, called security votes, and they spend the money without accountability.¹⁴⁸ The legislative arm of government ought to ask for the accountability of the funds. There have been investigations of some cases of political representatives who were alleged to have misappropriated public funds.

¹⁴¹ The Vanguard, August 25, 2013 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/08/nigerian-lawmakers-are-the-highest-paid-in-the-world/>

¹⁴² The Punch, July 29, 2024. <https://punchng.com/new-minimum-wage-for-all-nigerian-workers-akpabio/> (Naira keeps falling against dollar, hence, it is difficult to always specify the exchange rate or the conversion of all the naira figures to dollar)

¹⁴³ Yagboyaju, p.100

¹⁴⁴ Adebola Rafiu Bakare, 2023. *National Assembly and Legislative Effective in Nigeria's Fourth Republic*. (Singapore: Palgrave), p.185

¹⁴⁵ Punch News, May 13, 2024. <https://punchng.com/national-state-assemblies-to-spend-n724bn-in-2024/>

¹⁴⁶ Punch News, May 13, 2024

¹⁴⁷ Yagboyaju, p.100

¹⁴⁸ Yagboyaju, p.100

However, those cases have not been concluded, and people need to know the outcome.¹⁴⁹ There is a lot of excessive spending in the Fourth Republic, and both the executive and legislative arms of government are involved in corruption. In 2020, the National Assembly requested N37 billion for the renovation of the National Assembly, but due to the outcry of Nigerians, it was slashed to N9 billion. Unfortunately, when it rained, the edifice's roof was found leaking. It is either the building was not renovated or was poorly renovated, but there needed to be a form of accountability. However, in 2021, N30 billion was allotted for the renovation to forestall the leakage. Nigerians were shocked that in 2024, the legislature sought another N30 billion to renovate the same National Assembly. What committee is handling the renovation, and what assurance do they give Nigerians about the durability of the renovation? Has the committee come out to explain the recurring call for renovation? We should even ask: Is there a committee at all, and which company handles the project? This can be likened to the deficiencies of political representation in the Second Republic that we discussed, where political representatives from NPN would award projects to incompetent hands due to party affiliations.

Even with Nigeria's economic recession and untold hardship, President Tinubu approved and commissioned N21 billion Vice President's official residence.¹⁵⁰ Was the house in bad shape, and if it needs renovation, why invest so much money? Painfully, the Nigerian government keeps borrowing money and spending on what does not improve the life and economy of the people they represent. Will they account for the expenses? In a country where some Nigerians are homeless, the major concern of the President is to claim to want to give this vice the best of renovation of the house. As representatives, they should renovate the hospitals, renovate schools, and invest in education. The lecturers should receive their salaries as of when due. In 2009, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) reported that ten million Nigerian children were out of school,¹⁵¹ while the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) reported 820 companies either closed or suspended production between 2000 and 2008.¹⁵² Within the one year of Tinubu's presidency, his administration has borrowed N20.1 trillion with

¹⁴⁹ Yagboyaju, p.101

¹⁵⁰ Premium Times, June 7, 2024 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/701670-tinubu-commissions-n21-billion-vps-official-residence.html>

¹⁵¹ Yagboyaju, p.103

¹⁵² Yagboyaju, p.103

the approval of the National Assembly,¹⁵³ while the economy of the country is in no way better. The continuous fall of the naira and insecurity in the country has made business less profitable for multinationals, forcing them to shut down operations either fully or partially. These include multinational companies such as Unilever, manufacturer of famous detergents and butter in Nigeria, GlaxoSmithKline, a drug and vaccine manufacturer, and oil companies such as SHELL, Exxon Mobil, and ENI oil to exit Nigeria.¹⁵⁴ The President has been called upon to endeavor to stop multinationals from leaving,¹⁵⁵ but how will he do it when he keeps lavishing money on what does not improve the economy of the country? The exit and partial operations of companies have led to an increase in the rate of unemployment, insecurities, and various types of crimes, such as armed robbery and kidnapping, among other vices. Why would political representatives request the people to be patient and make certain sacrifices while money is wasted or spent unaccounted for by those same representatives? Why will the National Assembly, which ought to represent the people's will, approve various requests to borrow money without accountability for the previously approved loans? Is it not the case that they will share in the money, hence they hurriedly approve the requests and do not bother to check the expenses for which the money is approved?

2.12. The Merits of Political Representation in the Fourth Republic

The Fourth Republic began with some remarkable merits of political representation.

1. Anti-Corruption Measures: The Fourth Republic began with the establishment of two anti-corruption institutions by President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration. Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offenses Commission (ICPC), instituted in 2000, aimed to rid Nigeria of corruption through lawful enforcement and prevention measures. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2003, whose work entails the investigation of all financial crimes, including money laundering, illegal fund transfer, counterfeiting, market fraud,

¹⁵³ The Vanguard, June 3, 2024 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/06/apprehension-as-fg-borrows-n20-1trn-under-tinubu/>

¹⁵⁴ The Vanguard, December 11, 2023 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/12/mass-exit-of-multinationals-from-nigeria/>

¹⁵⁵ The Vanguard, June 9, 2024 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/06/stop-exit-of-multinational-companies-from-nigeria-tinubu-told/>

and any form of scam, with the aim of restoring integrity, courage, professionalism within the economy of Nigeria. These institutions have been able to achieve some success in recovering stolen funds from political representatives and other citizens, though their efforts are being truncated some times by political interferences and failure of the justice system, such as the case of Delta State's former governor, James Ibori, whom the EFCC presented to the court with evidence of corruption but the judge dismissed the case.¹⁵⁶ However, he went to the UK and was convicted by the UK judiciary for the same reasons he was charged in Nigeria.¹⁵⁷

2. Educational Reform: The Fourth Republic launched a Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in 1999 with the aim of ensuring free, compulsory, and universal basic education for every Nigerian child to reduce the rate of dropout, improve literacy rates, and ensure every child has access to education up to junior secondary school

3. Regional Development Initiative: The Fourth Republic considers the regions in Nigeria where its oil is being produced and listens to their cry over the environmental damage caused to their lands and yet does not have developments. The Niger Delta region was a minority, and in 2000, the President instituted the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to offer a lasting solution to the socio-economic difficulties in the region. Observe the region's ecology and ensure political peace to facilitate rapid and sustainable development.

2.13. The Deficiencies of the Fourth Republic Political Representation

1. Corruption: The prevalence plaque of political representation in the Fourth Republic is the widespread corruption among the legislative arms and the executive, and unfortunately, the judiciary ought to defend the law and act as the last hope of the people are also corrupt because the executive fund them, and certain judicial appointments are approved by the legislative and the executive, so how can they truly carry out their judgment unbiased? This needs to be improved to maintain the effectiveness and credibility of political representation. Nigeria experiences excessive waste of money on funding the personal interests of political

¹⁵⁶ The Vanguard, December 17, 2009 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2009/12/efcc-kicks-as-court-quashes-graft-charges-against-ibori/>

¹⁵⁷ BBC News, May 18, 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-57161645>

representatives and diversion of public resources which was meant for public services and development, leading to poor infrastructures, education, and healthcare, with a high rate of unemployment, political apathy, and various crimes which affects the overall quality life of the people.

2. Lack of Accountability and Transparency: Political representatives often act with impunity, lavishly spending public funds without being held accountable. There were billions of naira borrowed by the government, and projected awarded without completion, and yet there are no accountability for them. There are allowances given to senators without Nigerians knowing the reasons for those allowances. This indicate lack of transparency on the part of political representatives. There ought to be transparency in their political actions and accountability for their representation.

3. Gender Inequality: Not many female political representatives or leaders of some political organizations yet exist. The Fourth Republic, unlike previous republics, has a few women involved in political positions, but they are mostly deputies, with a few exceptions. There are significantly fewer women in the National and State Assemblies. Some people still feel the role of women lies in the kitchen and caring for the family. Are cultural barriers still still impeding women from leadership? There ought not to be any discrimination based on sex when it comes to who will politically represent the people. The ability to govern is not sex or gender-based.

4. Election malpractices: Election rigging was seen in various parts of Nigeria, and various election monitoring bodies observed this. The elections of 2023 came with high hopes for many Nigerians as they expected free and fair elections, and this was because INEC has promised what they refer to as INEC Result Viewing (IReV), which means they will conduct the processes of casting votes while there will be E-transmission of results; the IReV is a device for immediate digitalized results or E-transmission of results but this was a failure which broke many Nigerians hearts, as the failure was seen as means to rigging. After all the billions of naira spent to ensure a free and fair elections, how could the IReV stop working on general election day? This could mean that the INEC cannot conduct free and fair elections in Nigeria, an election that will reflect the people's choice. The voting system ought to be digitalized so everyone can see their votes online. INEC has failed Nigerians and there is a need for electoral reforms that will ensure transparency in the electoral processes.

5. Ethnic Rivalry and Political Thuggery: This was more seen in the 2023 elections in many parts of the country, sadly, especially among the Yoruba ethnic group. Could it be that ethnic rivalry was a political tool used by politicians to their advantage? The country could be peaceful, but when elections draw near, then the politicians come up with comments that will cause ethnic rivalry, and the most popular was used by the current President who stated, "*Emilokan*,"¹⁵⁸ meaning it is my turn, that is, it was his turn to become Nigeria's President, and the Yoruba jumped on it. Other ethnic groups living in Yorubaland of Nigeria were bullied during the elections; some were disenfranchised. There were thugs close to various election polling units either carrying out vote buying or bullying people to vote for a particular political party. After years of Nigeria's independence, the people to see the unity in their diversity and how nationalism and patriotism could be helpful in building a peaceful coexisting society.

6. Lack of Youth Involvement in Power: After many years of independence, the country is still governed by a set of old people. The power rotates among the same political class, and with their richness, they leave the youth little or no chance to be involved in political representation. With many of the youths being either unemployed or underemployed while those self-employed are struggling with their entrepreneurship, how many will still be interested in seeking political positions to represent the will of the people?

7. Militarization of democracy: The Fourth Republic had some political representatives who were retired military personnel. The Fourth Republic began with Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military general Head of State; the country also had General Muhammandu Buhari, a former military Head of State. These men and a few others brought in their military mentalities or policies into democracy. They carried out certain undemocratic actions and are yet to be brought to face the law. In 1999 there was a conflict in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria over widespread agitations for oil resources control and environmental protection. 12 Policemen were killed in the Odi community of Bayelsa State, which was one of the states in the Niger Delta Region, with some military personnel ambushed. Obasanjo was alleged to have ordered the military to invade Odi community in Bayelsa State, killing and burning down houses. The federal government claimed 43 casualties, while some other reports say over 2,500 civilians were killed. Similarly, in October 2020, the youths took to the streets for peaceful protest against

¹⁵⁸ The Vanguard, October 22, 2022 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/10/the-emilokan-syndrome/>

police brutality by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). The protest was titled EndSARS, which lasted a few days and was more pronounced as the Lekki Toll Gate of Lagos State. Buhari threatened Nigerian youths on Twitter, but his tweet was brought down, which he did not like. On October 20, 2020, the Lagos State Governor declared a curfew and asked the people to go home. The military came there, and while the youths were singing the National Anthem, the military shotgun at them.¹⁵⁹ The government wanted to deny this, but unfortunately, DJ Switch was on Twitter live video, updating the world while CNN and other stations tagged along. The former US Presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton, went on Twitter and called on Nigeria's President and the military to stop the killing.¹⁶⁰ Buhari got angry due to Twitter's involvement, and he banned Twitter.¹⁶¹ Are these not cases mixing military rule with democracy? This is what we could call militarizing democracy when political representatives exert so much power even beyond the constitution that it is the militarization of democracy.

8. Self-enriching orientations: The Fourth Republic has people joining politics to enrich themselves. This is seen in how the political representatives borrow money to fund their lifestyle at the expense of the people they represent. People perceive politics as a lucrative business; when one succeeds in any representative position, one can become wealthy. The fact that many past political representatives are yet to be prosecuted gives the impression that political corruption is allowed. Is it possible to have a successful or growing democratic country where politicians are far richer than entrepreneurs and investors?

From the foregoing, we can see the whole issue of the Fourth Republic, and there has yet to be much progress. Political representatives still need to fulfill their role of representing the interests of their people. Why are the political representatives not representing in good ways? How will the people evaluate their political representatives? Is it not the case that the country lacks the ethics of good representation? What is the ethics of a good representative? In the next chapter, we shall examine the ethics of good representatives as the tool for evaluating political representatives.

¹⁵⁹ Premium Times, October 21, 2020 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/422227-endsars-protesters-waved-nigerian-flag-sang-nations-anthem-before-soldiers-fired-at-them-witnesses.html>

¹⁶⁰ Premium Times, October 21, 2020

¹⁶¹ CNN June 5, 2021 <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/06/04/africa/nigeria-suspends-twitter-operations-intl/index.html>

3. EVALUATION OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN NIGERIA

In the preceding chapters, we identified several types of political representations; with Nigeria as a case study, we identified critical issues that undermine political representation, such as pervasive corruption, lack of accountability, ethnic and regional division, gender inequality, and systemic inefficiencies within her political institutions. These challenges have deep implications for the efficiency of democratic representation and the legitimacy of democracy in Nigeria; in other words, the marring of democratic representation will invariably affect the legitimacy of democratic institutions in the country.

In this chapter, we shall provide an evaluation of political representation, and it is pertinent to mention that the focus will be on the evaluation of democratic representatives in Nigeria. The concept of representative here is not limited to the legislature, but we also consider the executives elected to represent the people's interests. We shall be applying theoretical frameworks and other criteria. It will involve looking at the institutional evaluative framework, where we would employ some scholars' evaluative framework of democratic representations, and we shall also look at the ethical evaluative framework from Suzanne Dovi's "The Good Representative." We will explore how these could perhaps help evaluate democratic representation in Nigeria, and we will possibly make recommendations.

3.1. INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Democratic representation is an interactive relationship shared between the representative and his constituents built on consent, responsiveness, and accountability.¹⁶² The first stage involves the constituents choosing their representatives through election, thereby consenting to be represented, while the second stage is that representatives must perform certain acts of responsiveness within which those they represent can evaluate them.¹⁶³ Representation should be

¹⁶² Robin M. Lauer mann, 2014. *Constituent Perceptions of Political Representation: How Citizens Evaluate Their Representatives* (New York: Palgrave MacMillian), p.4

¹⁶³ Lauer mann, p.4

balanced with the ability of the represented to hold their representatives accountable for their behaviors. However, how do constituents evaluate political representatives? What factors are essential in the evaluation of representatives? To answer the question, let us examine the frameworks provided by some scholars.

Robin Lauermaun states, "Evaluation of representative performance are derived from explicit and implicit comparisons between constituent expectations and their perceptions of representative responsiveness."¹⁶⁴ He argues that constituents' perception of representative responsiveness is a means to hold the representative accountable and that they can evaluate representatives based on the nature of responsiveness they believe the representative is providing.¹⁶⁵ By perception, Lauermaun means how the actions of the representatives have been, and responsiveness is the expectations the constituents have had from the representative to ensure the policies advocated are for their good. Accountability is the final component of the evaluation of representatives. These three are keys to the evaluation of political representatives.¹⁶⁶ What type of perception are the constituents expected to have to aid the evaluation of political representatives? Lauermaun says the constituents should look at the behavior of their representatives. However, he recognizes the challenges of examining the behavior of representatives as he argues that when examining the behavior of their representatives, constituents will have varying degrees of political interests, knowledge, and partnership, among others. Lauermaun, therefore, considers answering the pertinent question of what types of behavior could be the more relevant. He opines that the constituents must be aware of their representatives, that is, know who their representative is; they must have expectations of what their representative should do, which their preferences in action and policy must reflect, and finally, they must have a perception of what their representative has done.¹⁶⁷

Is it the case that constituents will always know who their representatives are? Do they even know what to expect, or are they just concerned about having their daily bread? In a country like Nigeria, where corruption has eaten deep into her political system, leading to political apathy, some citizens do not care who rules, while some others vote based on party affiliation and not

¹⁶⁴ Lauermaun, p.70

¹⁶⁵ Lauermaun, p.22

¹⁶⁶ Lauermaun, p.29

¹⁶⁷ Lauermaun, pp.36-37

really about the individual whom they cast their votes for; while some also are deceived by the gift of food items shared only during elections by representatives,¹⁶⁸ what has been called "stomach infrastructure." Lauermann recognizes that applying his evaluative framework has a potential hurdle: whether constituents will possess the knowledge he proposes as the construct for evaluating political representatives.¹⁶⁹ Lauermann's evaluative framework may have some hurdles. However, it is a step in the right direction. It will require political participation from citizens, with political education of citizens' roles in the effectiveness of the political system. Perhaps, if there is political sensitization on various channels, especially television, radio stations, and social media, on citizenry or constituents' roles in the legitimacy and effectiveness of political representation, then they could have the proper knowledge of their expectations from political representatives and base on the responsiveness of the representatives, the constituents can hold the representatives accountable.

Hanna Pitkin, who is profound for her discourse on "The Concept of Representation," also provided us with an evaluative framework for representation. Within a democratic institution, Pitkin has argued that authoritative, electoral accountability, descriptive, and symbolic representations are insufficient for political representation. She proposes substantive representation, which means the representative acts for others and ensures that she considers his constituents in any political decision.¹⁷⁰ Pitkin recommends substantive representation should be practiced in democratic institutions, and constituents should evaluate their representatives by asking two questions: Is the representative acting for them? Secondly, does he or she consider them in political decisions? The constituents should be able to see that their interests are involved in policymaking and that there are no arbitrary decisions on people's choices.¹⁷¹ Pitkin further stated that a representative must be seen as capable of independent judgment and action; however, she must apply discretion since she is substantively acting for others.¹⁷²

Can we apply Pitkin's framework to evaluate Nigeria's democratic representation? Pitkin's evaluative framework is undoubtedly a step in the right direction. However, it also has some

¹⁶⁸ Vanguard, March 27, 2015 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/03/stomach-infrastructure-the-newest-vocabulary-in-nigerias-political-dictionary/>

¹⁶⁹ Lauermann, p.37

¹⁷⁰ Pitkin, p.144

¹⁷¹ Pitkin, p.212

¹⁷² Pitkin, p.212

problems in its application to Africa, especially Nigeria. We agree that constituents should consider representatives who act for them and consider them in political decisions, but applying the independent judgment of representatives will be problematic in Nigeria due to corruption. Pitkin has suggested that when a representative is to make a decision outside the expectations of his constituents, he must not be arrogantly persistent on his decision by leaving the represented in the dark; he must explain why he believes his decision is still within their best interest. This is where the application becomes problematic because of the level of corruption in the government. Pitkin recognizes that her definition of political representation and evaluative framework work could have problems with application. Hence, she recommends that when her postulation becomes impossible, we can return to other representation views while we attempt a better definition of the activity of the representatives and its specific relation to political life.¹⁷³

Another scholar who provided us with another evaluative framework is Melissa Williams, who requested that citizens should see the activities of representation and understand it as mediation; in other words, representatives are mediators.¹⁷⁴ Williams recommends an evaluative framework of constituents looking out for representatives who would speak for the voiceless and the marginalized, one who has memories of what the constituents have been through and who could be trusted. So, the evaluative framework the constituents will consider or employ will ask: Is the representative familiar with how historically the people have been excluded from political and economic benefits? How has the representative spoken up for the people in the government? Can the representative be trusted? According to Williams, a relationship distrust can "at least partially be mended if the disadvantaged group is represented by its own members."¹⁷⁵ Williams' view could be likened to descriptive representation.

Applying Williams' evaluative framework to Nigeria's political representation will be helpful. However, its application is met with corruption and negligence. Rivers State in Nigeria is one of the states where the country gets its crude oil from, and the people strived for political representation; the Senate approved Diezani Allison-Madueke from the region as the Petroleum Minister, and she served in that position from 2010 to 2015. She ought to be a political mediator

¹⁷³ Pitkin, p.210

¹⁷⁴ Melissa Williams, (1998). *Voice, Trust, and Memory: Marginalized Groups and Failing of Liberal Representation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p.8

¹⁷⁵ Williams, p.14

for his region, or descriptive representative, however, she was accused of corruption, but she denied it all. Later, in 2023, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) said that about \$153 million and more than 80 properties had been recovered from the minister. Similarly, The US Department of Justice has recovered assets totaling \$53.1m linked to Alison-Madueke's alleged corruption thanks to evidence from the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA).¹⁷⁶ NCA has also charged her with bribery as she is suspected of accepting financial rewards for awarding multi-million dollar oil and gas contracts.¹⁷⁷

These were cases of people choosing political mediators whom they felt understood their political and economic plights yet failed.

Iris Marion Young is another theorist of representation who provided us with an evaluative framework for political representation. Her evaluative framework could be likened to Pitkin's formalistic representation, but she merged the two aspects of formalistic representation: authorization and accountability.¹⁷⁸ Young proposes that the citizens, having authorized the representative to represent them in the government, should hold the representative accountable.¹⁷⁹ The citizens should evaluate representatives by checking if they advance inclusivity and equitability of all they represent.¹⁸⁰ When they observe that their representatives failed in these, then in the next election, such a person should not be voted in to represent. Young's evaluative framework is theoretically suitable for Nigeria, as we would agree that her framework could bring forth citizenry political consciousness and participation in a democratic system. However, the application of the framework is where the problem lies. Will the citizens vote for representatives without being deceived by the stomach infrastructure that happens during the election?

¹⁷⁶ BCC News, August 22, 2023. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-66582585>

¹⁷⁷ BCC News, August 22, 2023. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-66582585>

¹⁷⁸ Iris Marion Young, (2000). *Inclusion and Democracy*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.129

¹⁷⁹ Young, p.129

¹⁸⁰ Young, p.129

3.2. ETHICAL EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

We have been discussing the institutional evaluative framework for political representation. Meanwhile, some scholars have invited us to examine the ethical aspect of leadership or representation. What do we mean by ethical representation? Michael Brown and Linda Treviño argue that ethical leadership or representation is “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making.”¹⁸¹ This means that a relationship coexists between a representative and the people who elected him, and he must communicate with them. In Cameron Brown's perspective, leadership or representation is expressed as being participative, supportive, and avoiding toxic acts.¹⁸² Joanne Ciulla opines that ethical leadership or representation means to be a good leader both morally and effectively expressed in care, participating in people's lives, and being supportive.¹⁸³ While a bad representative will be the one who lacks consensus and direction, and always ignores the voices or choices of his constituents.¹⁸⁴

Suzanne Dovi, in her book *The Good Representative*, delved into the ethics of democratic representation. Her concept is essential to us as she leads us into the marriage of political representation and the ethics of representation; she is concerned with good representation. She focuses on the standards and evaluation of political representatives. She believes we need to understand that there must be more to what it means to represent democratically and that we should focus on the proper criteria for assessing democratic representatives and identifying good representatives.¹⁸⁵ She invites us to examine who is a good representative and what criteria democratic citizens should use in electing democratic representatives. How democratic citizens

¹⁸¹ Brown et al. 2005, p.120 in Cameron A. Batmanghlich, 2015 *Why Leaders Fail Ethically: A Paradigmatic Evaluation of Leadership* (Cham: Springer International Publishing), p.10

¹⁸² Cameron A. Batmanghlich, (2015). *Why Leaders Fail Ethically: A Paradigmatic Evaluation of Leadership* (Cham: Springer International Publishing), p.10

¹⁸³ Joanne B. Ciulla, 2004. “Ethics and Leadership Effectiveness” in Cameron A. Batmanghlich, (2015). *Why Leaders Fail Ethically: A Paradigmatic Evaluation of Leadership* (Cham: Springer International Publishing), pp.9-10

¹⁸⁴ Batmanghlich, pp.20-23

¹⁸⁵ Suzanne Dovi, (2007). “*The Good Representative*” (New York: Blackwell Publishing), p.6

answer these questions will help in the election of ethical representatives who advance good policies and the performance of democratic institutions.¹⁸⁶

Dovi defines good democratic representation as that political representative whose advocacy work maintains and advances the legitimacy of democratic institutions and whose advocacy work fosters the norms and values distinctive of the democratic institution;¹⁸⁷ moreover, these norms and values are civic equality, self-governance, and inclusion.¹⁸⁸ Civic equality, which is central to the legitimacy of democratic institutions, would mean citizens have voting equality at the decisive state of collective decision;¹⁸⁹ it permits the resolution of disagreements among democratic citizens fairly and peacefully. Self-governance is about citizens taking a role in policy decisions by electing good representatives, and that citizens are considered in policymaking, encouraging civic participation and providing a ground that will allow citizens to grow in their talents and every means to sustenance;¹⁹⁰ while inclusion is having all citizens considered in policymaking, accepting all, regardless of those from the opposition party, avoiding all forms of marginalization, and fostering mutual relations among all citizens.¹⁹¹ Why are there only three values? Dovi recognizes other values such as liberty, tolerance, and the rule of law, which she argues may coexist with democratic institutions, but they are not distinctive of democratic institutions.¹⁹² Democratic norms and values must provide some guidelines for structuring formal political institutions as democratic institutions.¹⁹³ Whether this is convincing enough or not, we shall not delve into the argument; rather, we will explore how Pitkin's norms and values could help our ethical evaluative framework for democratic representation. So, good democratic representatives respect and work by the three norms and values that are distinctive of democratic institutions.¹⁹⁴

However, it is still obscure how democratic citizens are to evaluate their representatives. Dovi would argue that “democratic citizens should evaluate their representatives by the way in which

¹⁸⁶ Dovi, p.6

¹⁸⁷ Dovi., p.2

¹⁸⁸ Dovi, p.3

¹⁸⁹ Dovi, p.106

¹⁹⁰ Dovi, pp.134-135

¹⁹¹ Dovi, p.145

¹⁹² Dovi, p.3

¹⁹³ Dovi, p.3

¹⁹⁴ Dovi, p.3

they advocate – that is, by how they advance public policies on behalf of democratic citizens.”¹⁹⁵ It does not seem clear enough yet, and so Dovi attempts to clarify us by arguing that the ethical evaluative framework that citizens should use is for them to look out for democratic representatives who advance the three norms and values of democratic institutions; she went ahead to opine virtues to be used by citizens to evaluate their democratic representatives. She subsumed the three norms and values under the virtues. Dovi recommends three virtues of democratic representation: fair-mindedness, critical trust-building, and good gatekeeping. Good democratic representatives are those that manifest three virtues, corresponding to the three norms and values of democratic advocacy: “the virtue of fair-mindedness, through which a representative contributes to the realization of the value of civic equality; the virtue of critical trust building, through which a representative contributes to the realization of self-governance; and, finally, the virtue of good gatekeeping, through which a representative contributes to the realization of inclusion.”¹⁹⁶

The virtue of Fair-mindedness means that democratically fair-minded representatives are those whose advocacy work fosters civic equality; they are adequately sensitive to civic equality.¹⁹⁷ Dovi argues that a democratic representative exhibits this sensitivity when she considers and decides on policies to support or oppose in the light of their effect on civic equality.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, a democratic representative must oppose her society's unjust structure and policies. The second virtue is critical trust building, which means that a good democratic representative are those who foster trust from citizens by providing reliable information about their advocacy work,¹⁹⁹ keep their fellow representatives accountable, acting as watchdogs, "expose and denounce dishonesty, manipulation, or incompetence on the part of their peers, be they opponents or allies."²⁰⁰ A good democratic representative can promote critical trust through good role models, which involves living up to specific democratic commitments made earlier to their constituents.²⁰¹ The third virtue is good gatekeeping, which is the political inclusion of all citizens by fostering mutual

¹⁹⁵ Dovi, p.3

¹⁹⁶ Dovi, p.90

¹⁹⁷ Dovi, p.101

¹⁹⁸ Dovi, p.101

¹⁹⁹ Dovi, p.139

²⁰⁰ Dovi, p.140

²⁰¹ Dovi, p.140

relations among citizens and the representative serving the interests of the citizens.²⁰² A good democratic representative will promote a sense of belonging to a political community among all citizens. She must develop relations with the marginalized and dispossessed and with citizens who are their political opponents, knowing fully well that they now represent both those who voted or not for her.²⁰³

3.3. THE PROBLEMS OF THE THREE VIRTUES

The three virtues are not without problems, and Dovi recognizes them. On fair-mindedness, she said that commitment to civic equality might render the representative political irrelevant, especially in a society rife with racism, xenophobia, and, of course, tribalism in Nigeria. She argues that advocating for civic equality could even lead to the mistreatment of representatives by some of their constituents, who could show up at the polls and disrupt a peaceful election or even attack the representative. However, Dovi argues that good democratic representatives understand this situation and sometimes are even willing to endure the pain in order to preserve democratic institutions.²⁰⁴ She further said that “the degree to which the political system rewards or punishes those who pursue political advocacy in a fair-minded way will, in short, influence the extent to which that system promotes good democratic representation.”²⁰⁵

Critical trust building, which is the second virtue, has its problems. It has a capacity problem, which means that some citizens are incapable of self-governance, which may be due to their being mentally disabled, sick, or convicted felons. They are not able to participate fully in political decisions. There is also the dependence problem, which has to do with citizens not having the desire to assess or not being able to assess their representatives directly. So, they depend on their elites to communicate their needs and preferences.²⁰⁶ A representative is not elected to represent only the elites or communicate only with the elites; rather, he ought to represent the people inclusively and not exclusively to the elite. The dependence problem comes with many abuses such that the representative may not have a direct relationship with his

²⁰² Dovi, p.146

²⁰³ Dovi, p.162

²⁰⁴ Dovi, p.122

²⁰⁵ Dovi, p.122

²⁰⁶ Dovi, p.142

constituents which ought not to be so. Also, it could lead to a political union primarily between the elites and the representative for their mutual and selfish benefits. This is a problem for a good democratic representation. There is also the problem of participation burdens by which some citizens give up on trying to make their voice heard by those representatives, and the last is the viciousness problem, which has to do with certain representatives instigating division among citizens with vicious ideas such as tribalism in Nigeria.

Advocating for the third virtue, good gatekeeping, comes with a sycophant problem: the practice of democratic representatives surrounded by yes-men and flatters, which undermines good democratic representation. Another problem is vicious divisiveness, which concerns representatives fostering divisions. There is also the paralysis problem, which is the “difficulty to prioritize among different forms of marginalization, especially when marginalization arises from social and political injustices.”²⁰⁷ Democratic representatives may have a problem choosing which form of marginalization to address, and in so doing, others will be pressing and getting angry at the representative for not prioritizing their marginalized condition.

Given all these problems associated with the three virtues, Dovi argues that awareness of the problems associated with the virtues and the knowledge of the three virtues will serve as a constraint on representatives that help ensure fairness and legitimacy of democratic institutions,²⁰⁸ and with these virtues, representatives could provide a fair and peaceful resolution of political conflicts within their constituencies. Democratic countries should enjoy self-governance; the citizens should be able to enjoy political equality without discrimination based on gender or race, and more female political participation should be encouraged by becoming representatives, making it an inclusive democratic representation. Democratic representation consists of advancing public policies in ways that are properly sensitive to civic equality, guarding against social and economic privileges that promote inequalities.²⁰⁹ Dovi argues that it is these three virtues that the citizens will use in evaluating their representatives to produce good democratic representatives. She believes that democratic citizens ought to prefer political representation that only has these three virtues, and this is evident because it would be right if a

²⁰⁷ Dovi, p.176

²⁰⁸ Dovi, p.5

²⁰⁹ Dovi, p.90

citizen chooses representatives who advocate fairness and inclusivity and build representative-constituent trust.

3.4. THE THREE VIRTUES AND NIGERIA'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Having discussed Dovi's ethical evaluative framework, which involves using the three virtues to evaluate democratic representatives, let us now see how to relate them to Nigeria's democratic representation. The problems associated with the virtues are relatable to Nigeria's political system, and both citizens and democratic representatives ought to be aware of them in order to produce good democratic institutions.

The virtue of good gatekeeping may be the most abused evaluative framework in Nigeria due to the problem of sycophants. Perhaps due to poverty and selfish interests, there are many situations where political representatives fail in their advocacy work but are still praised by some citizens. There was a situation of money laundry in Bayelsa State by Diepreye Alamiyeseigha, a Governor. The state is among the major producers of oil in Nigeria. He amassed a fortune in foreign bank accounts, acquired houses in London, California, and South Africa, and an oil refinery in Ecuador.²¹⁰ He went to the UK, but when the UK court wanted to charge him, he dressed up as a woman to escape £1.8m charges in the UK. This ought to be a massive disgrace to the Bayelsa State and the Nigeria democracy. However, ironically, Alamiyeseigha returned to his home village a folk hero after apparently escaping Europe in a dress and on a forged passport. Crowds cheered and waved leaves to welcome back the governor.²¹¹

When democratic citizens surround their representatives as yes-men, evaluation becomes difficult. Bayelsa state is just an example; there are situations where democratic representatives have not fulfilled their political mandate given to them by the citizens, yet when such representatives come out in public, he is cheered by some of the citizens and sometimes they get some tokens such as food or money.²¹² This is one of the demerits of descriptive representative,

²¹⁰ The New York Times, 14 October, 2015 <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/15/world/diepreye-alamiyeseigha-nigerian-ex-governor-dies-at-62.html>

²¹¹ The Guardian, November 23, 2005. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/nov/23/hearafrica05.development>

²¹² Vanguard, March 27, 2015 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/03/stomach-infrastructure-the-newest-vocabulary-in-nigerias-political-dictionary/>

rather than condemn the wrongful act of the governor, his constituents praised and welcomed him regardless of his crime and this because he was their son, and they attempted to defend him against all odds. Dovi would suggest that citizens examine their representatives' advocacy work and ask if their interests have been represented. Examine if their representative has truly been a good gatekeeper to them. Perhaps, if the citizens could do this, Nigeria could have good democratic gatekeepers as their representatives.

The challenge of applying the virtues of critical trust building and good gatekeeping is the problem of vicious divisiveness. Ethnicity, or rather tribalism, remains a major vicious divisiveness used by some representatives for their selfish interest of winning an election. This was more characterized in the last general election. Bola` Tinubu, who is now the president of the country, began his 2023 presidential aspiration with the phrase *Emilokan*, meaning it is my turn, his turn to become the president.²¹³ Since he is a Yoruba man, many from his tribe jumped at it, and some of his party members used it as a campaign slogan. Other tribes living in Yoruba states or regions found it difficult to vote for their choice of candidate, especially the Igbos. During the 2023 Lagos governorship election, Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour of the Labour Party, born of an Igbo mother and married to an Igbo woman, presented his manifesto. For fear of the ruling party losing to him, Femi Fani-Kayode (FFK) a former Special Assistant on Public Affairs, a former Minister of Aviation, as well as a former Minister of Culture and Tourism, a Yoruba man whose wife is also an Igbo incited the Yoruba's against the Igbos; Bayo Onanuga a journalist joined FFK and told the Yorubas to teach the Igbos a lesson never to interfere in the politics of Lagos State.²¹⁴

Similarly, Musiliu Akinsanya, Lagos State Parks Management Committee Chairman, also known as MC Oluomo, categorically warned Igbos before the governorship election to stay home if they will not vote for the current Lagos State Governor.²¹⁵ These vicious comments further caused some divisions, and thugs were out to attack those who would not vote for the current government. The election period ought to be when citizens evaluate the performances of their representatives and not when they should allow any form of tribal-political bigotry. Using

²¹³ The Vanguard, October 22, 2022 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/10/the-emilokan-syndrome/>

²¹⁴ The Vanguard, April 2, 2023. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/04/attacks-on-the-igbo-in-lagos/>

²¹⁵ Daily Trust, March 17, 2023 <https://dailytrust.com/anger-as-mc-oluomo-threatens-igbo-voters-in-lagos/#:~:text=Addressing%20supporters%20of%20the%20ruling,us%2C%20sit%20down%20at%20home.>

Dovi's first virtue, which is fair-mindedness, the citizens, regardless of their tribe, ought to ask: Are these words and actions fair? How does this foster civic equality? With such thinking, perhaps they could be able to evaluate their representatives and elect good representatives who promote good public policies through their advocacy work.

In order to achieve good democratic representatives, citizens have to play their part, and as Dovi would argue, "the ability to be a good democratic representative is not strictly within the control of individual representatives."²¹⁶ For the citizens to be able to evaluate their representatives, they must not allow any vicious statements to divide them; they should desist from being political tools to their own detriment; rather, they should evaluate the representatives using the three virtues. They should be able to have critical trust and not unquestioningly trust what is spoken by politicians and other government officials who use vicious divisiveness for their selfish interests.

Dovi's ethical evaluative framework may theoretically contribute massively to citizens' evaluation of their democratic representatives in Nigeria. However, we must admit that the problem lies in the proper application by the citizens and their representatives. It does not mean that Dovi's ethical evaluative framework would eliminate all the controversies about the proper behavior of a good democratic representative, and she admitted to that.²¹⁷ Application of Dovi's theory would require citizens' interest in their political system, political education, the consciousness to foster civic equality, critical trust in their relationship with the representatives, avoid political apathy and vicious divisiveness and perhaps, with these, may try to evaluate their representatives in order to produce good democratic representatives who are fair-minded, good gatekeepers and who form critical trust building with their citizens.

THE NIGERIA'S SYSTEMIC DEFICIENCIES AND OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

As Nigeria keeps struggling to live out the principles of democratic institutions and exploring the standards to evaluate their political representatives, there are two prevalent systemic deficiencies, and overturning these deficiencies may help achieve some success in whatever standard of evaluation the citizens employ in electing good democratic representatives. A good democratic

²¹⁶ Dovi, p.122

²¹⁷ Dovi, p.13

system is a precondition for good democratic representation. When the political system is known for its pervasive corruption, insensitivity to the political and economic needs of the people, and people's lack of trust, it becomes difficult to have a good democratic representatives. From a practical standpoint, for Nigeria to thrive as a democratic country, the people have to trust the political system; in other words, the institutional precondition for a good democratic system in Nigeria is trust in the system. However, certain systemic deficiencies have made many people not trust the system, which has also caused political apathy among some Nigerians. Before proceeding, let us quickly state that systemic deficiency means pervasive and consistent shortcomings or failures within the political system. Many systemic deficiencies are evident in our previous chapter's discussion on Nigeria's political representation. However, the focus is not on discussing them again but on pointing out two systemic deficiencies, namely, the Independence National Electoral Commission's (INEC) inability to conduct free, fair, and credible elections and also the Judiciary's failure in its justice system, these two have broken the trust of many Nigerians. We would recommend how to change them, which could help restore trust in the democratic system and enable the people to evaluate and elect good democratic representatives.

INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)

INEC is a body in charge of elections in Nigeria, responsible for conducting free, fair, and credible elections. From our previous discussions on elections conducted since Nigeria's independence, INEC has yet to be able to conduct free and credible elections, thereby becoming one of the systemic deficiencies within the country's political system. Though they are called independent, they are not truly independent. The chairman of INEC is appointed by the president of the country and approved by the National Assembly, but sometimes politicians interfere with the operations of INEC. There were moments when INEC-sensitive materials for elections were discovered in the possession of politicians, and since Nigeria operates voting by thumbprint, sometimes politicians were found with already thumbprinted ballot papers and filled result sheets.²¹⁸ There have also been cases of INEC staff accused of bribery and corruption. Ahead of

²¹⁸ This Day, March 10, 2019 <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2019/03/10/inecs-problem-is-one-and-simple/>

the 2015 general elections, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) discovered that some INEC officials accepted N23 billion (\$11 million) bribe,²¹⁹ similarly, 23 INEC staff allegedly collected N360 million in bribes during the December 10, 2016, legislative re-run election in Rivers State.²²⁰ INEC Chairman also admitted that some of his staff were involved in an N3.4 Billion bribe and has refunded their share of the bribe with the help of EFCC.²²¹ 2 INEC staff were later jailed for 21 years over the issue of bribery.²²² The 2023 elections were also not without electoral fraud.²²³

How can the citizens properly evaluate their representatives, given the systemic deficiencies of the INEC? It becomes problematic since some of the failures of INEC cause political apathy, as some citizens do not believe their votes would count in an election. No matter the evaluative framework chosen, INEC remains an excellent tool for citizens to exercise their electoral or civic right to elect representatives representing their interests. INEC was aware of some of her failures and proposed the Bimodal Voters Accreditation System (BVAS) and INEC Result Viewing Portal (IREV). BVAS is a tech device that allows voters to be identified and accredited through fingerprints and facial recognition. At the same time, IREV is an online portal where polling unit-level results are uploaded directly from the polling unit, transmitted, and available for public monitoring. INEC got N305 billion from the federal government for the 2023 elections, and it budgeted N114.2 billion for ICT-related expenses.²²⁴ Nigerians had high hopes and saw it as an opportunity to evaluate their representatives and elect those they conceive as advocates of their interests or good public policies. Still, unfortunately, INEC failed to display the results as promised; the network went off, and when questioned, the Chairman of INEC said the reason was glitches associated with the nature of the IREV portal. Also, the IREV was threatened by malicious cyberattacks.²²⁵

²¹⁹ Punch News, November 30, 2016 <https://punchng.com/n23bn-diezani-bribe-efcc-charge-100-electoral-officials/>

²²⁰ Daily Trust, March 15, 2017. <https://dailytrust.com/n360m-bribe-23-inec-staff-challenge-courts-jurisdiction/>

²²¹ Premium Times, April 13, 2017 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/228754-inec-staff-indicted-n3-4-billion-scandal-refund-bribe-money-chairman.html>

²²² Premium Times, December 12, 2019 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/367922-inec-staff-jailed-over-n362-million-bribe.html>

²²³ Punch News, March 3, 2024 <https://punchng.com/govt-begins-prosecution-of-inec-officials-others-for-electoral-fraud/>

²²⁴ Punch News, March 6, 2023 <https://punchng.com/how-bvas-irev-failed-first-elections-stress-test/>

²²⁵ Punch News, February 23, 2024 <https://punchng.com/inec-admits-irev-portal-experienced-challenges-during-2023-presidential-election/>

RECOMMENDATION

In order to enable democratic citizens to exercise their civic right to evaluate and elect good democratic representatives who will advocate for policies in the interest of the people, INEC should employ some renowned software engineers who will handle the BVAS and IRev. It will have to test load and stress tests its servers to avoid disappointments in future elections. By test load and stress test, we mean INEC should put a server through a simulation of the kind of traffic it would record and observe its response and vulnerability.²²⁶ This is possible because the INEC will always have voter data and know how many voters they expect for the election. Given the number, they can test load and stress test the IReV and check if the server will experience any glitches. They can know what else to do to improve the server if it does.

If INEC fixes BVAS and IReV, curbs the corruption within its system, properly trains its staff, has good logistic management to deliver election materials to polling units, and arranges for enough security, this could likely restore some trust in INEC and could be beneficial to citizens in their evaluation of political representation and election of good democratic representatives across the country.

Furthermore, voting can be electronic, just like those of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), which is a body of Nigerian Barristers. They held their first electronic voting in 2016 and subsequent elections, including this year, 2024, and they aim to facilitate the participation of NBA members from various locations and foster transparency.²²⁷ Admittedly, the NBA cannot be compared to the large population of Nigeria. However, it is possible to run such elections if INEC works towards it. It will save the cost of elections. They can begin by allowing both thumbprint voting and electronic voting to allow citizens who could not vote electronically to cast their votes still, and then gradually fade off the thumbprint voting system. The electronic voting system may be helpful as it allows citizens to evaluate their representatives and, from the comfort of their homes, cast their votes without fear.

²²⁶ Punch News, March 6, 2023 <https://punchng.com/how-bvas-irev-failed-first-elections-stress-test/>

²²⁷ Premium Times, April 16, 2024 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/686652-nba-rolls-out-plan-for-2024-elections.html>

THE NIGERIA JUDICIARY

The judiciary is the third arm of government. It plays a vital role in any democratic country to ensure the rule of law, adjudicate disputes, and uphold the rights of citizens. However, in Nigeria, the judiciary has been plagued with systemic deficiency. Some of its decisions cause political apathy and distrust for the justice system, impeding efforts to evaluate and elect good democratic representatives. For example 2009, Delta State's former governor, James Ibori, was accused of corruption. Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) investigated the matter. It charged him to court, but a Federal High Court sitting in Asaba, the capital city of Delta state, discharged the former governor from all the charges filed against him by the EFCC.²²⁸ However, some \$5.8m (£4.2m) was later recovered by UK agencies, and Ibori was convicted of money laundering in the UK. He was estimated to have stolen \$165m (£117m) from Delta state.²²⁹ How is it that Nigeria's judiciary could not convict Ibori even with all the evidence presented by EFCC and yet was convicted in the UK? Perhaps it was due to corruption in the Nigerian justice system.

The judiciary is accused of corruption, and according to the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), an estimated N9.4 billion was exchanged in a bribe-for-judgment scheme in Nigeria's judicial sector between 2018 and 2020.²³⁰ They reported that lawyers received bribes for favorable judgments, mostly in electoral and political matters.²³¹ This could be the reason some Nigerians do not trust the justice system. When elections are rigged and the case taken to court, the people do not trust the justice system because they believe the judges may have been bribed. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), Nigerian judges topped the list of public officials who received N721 billion cash bribes in 2023.²³² The systemic deficiency of the judiciary would impede the justice system,

²²⁸ Vanguard, December 17, 2009 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2009/12/efcc-kicks-as-court-quashes-graft-charges-against-ibori/>

²²⁹ BBC News, May 18, 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-57161645>

²³⁰ Premium Times, December 26, 2020 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/433257-at-least-n9-4bn-paid-as-bribe-for-justice-in-nigeria-in-two-years-icpc-report.html>

²³¹ Premium Times, December 26, 2020 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/433257-at-least-n9-4bn-paid-as-bribe-for-justice-in-nigeria-in-two-years-icpc-report.html>

²³² Vanguard, July 25, 2024 <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/07/judges-are-the-biggest-bribe-takers-in-nigeria-wow-what-a-country-by-olu-fasan/>

especially when some politicians engage in election malpractices, which violates citizens' right to evaluate and elect their representatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The judiciary should be well-paid, truly independent, and have financial autonomy. The salaries of the judiciary should come from the Nigeria Judicial Commission (NJC) on a federal level and from the state's Judicial Service Commission (JSC) on the state level; it should not come from the state government because this could make the judiciary puppets to the executives. The judiciary ought to be the hope of Nigerians, the hope of upholding democratic principles when violated, especially when citizens evaluate their representatives and elect those they wanted but were disappointed by election malpractices. When such a case is brought before the court, the judiciary must ensure the people get their political advocates, the representatives they voted for. The judiciary should sanitize its system of all forms of corruption, especially bribery, and punish those found with evidence of bribery and corruption of the justice system. Perhaps when these are done, it could help the citizens to evaluate and vote for good democratic representatives. The judiciary is indispensable in a democratic institution for citizens to evaluate and elect good democratic representatives in Nigeria. For example, when political representatives rig elections, the judiciary ought to be the people's last hope to defend the choice they voted for. In this sense, we could see the relationship between political representation and the judiciary in Nigeria's political system. When the justice system is sanitized of bribery and corruption and gains the people's trust, even the political representatives would not want to be involved in election rigging because they would know that the justice system will uphold the people's choice. It will also help promote good political representatives as those elected will know their constituents can hold them accountable, given their trust in the justice system.

CONCLUSION

The standard for evaluating political representation is a complex issue that intertwines theory foundations, practical implementations, and contextual nuances. This thesis has explored the broad concept of political representation, focusing on the intricacies of political representation in Nigeria and assessing various scholarly frameworks.

Chapter one was an overview of political representation, outlining the evolution, meaning, and significance of political representation as theorized by various scholars. One common thing in all the theories of political representation is that political representatives ought to represent the people's interests. Chapter two focuses on Nigeria's political representation, revealing the ethnicity, regionalism, and historical legacies that shape Nigeria's political system. It discusses the progress and failures of political representations, especially the challenges of pervasive corruption, lack of accountability, election malpractices, gender inequality, ethnic rivalry, militarized democracy, and lack of inclusivity. Chapter three focuses on the critiques of both institutional and ethical evaluative frameworks. These frameworks provide valuable tools for evaluating democratic representatives and highlight the inherent challenges of applying them in Nigeria.

Looking at the various evaluative frameworks presented by scholars, we cannot recommend one as the theory for evaluating political representation since we have already seen the challenges involved in all of them. It is also fascinating how some of the theorists recognize that their theory may not eliminate the challenges involved in achieving a democratic system of representation. Regarding the standard for evaluating political representation, we can use no specific theory or evaluative framework to comprehensively address the challenges in evaluating political representatives. From our discussion of theories of political representation, it becomes clear that a singular, universally applicable standard for evaluating political representation is difficult to establish. Instead, the standard should be pluralistic and context-dependent. It should include authorization, accountability, symbolism, substantive representation, mediation, and ethical values. In other words, the standard for evaluating political representatives should involve institutional and ethical evaluative frameworks.

“No democratic institution has ever lived up to democratic ideals.”²³³ However, achieving a democratic system where representatives will democratically represent the people is the duty of the representatives and the citizens. The evaluation of representatives should be the concern of citizens as it is essential in strengthening democracy and ensuring that the interests of the people are fairly represented. When citizens take up their duty to evaluate representatives, holding them accountable to be leaders who are fair-minded and good gatekeepers, then the representatives may represent, bearing in mind to advocate for policies according to the people's interest.

Formulating a theory that captures a pluralistic evaluative framework may be challenging. However, this thesis may provide an understanding and foundation for future research and practical application in the search for good political representation.

²³³ Dovi, p.ix

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